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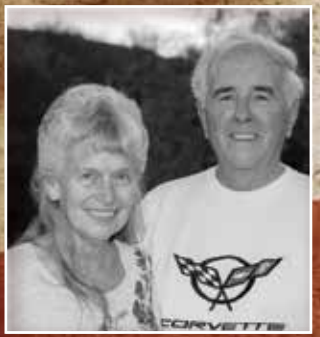

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"This is a republic, not a democracy — Let's keep it that way!"

New American

Vol. 40, No. 23 December 16, 2024

Cover Story

POLITICS

10 Historic Victories: What's Next?

by Peter Rykowski — The MAGA movement won big in November, but the fight to keep our Republic is only getting started.

CULTURE

19 The Most Important Votes Are Yet to Be Cast

by Selwyn Duke — The choices we make in our daily lives shape our culture and the type of country we have.

Features

POLITICS

25 Early Voting Reshapes Elections

by D. Michael DeRidder — Donald Trump and the Republican Party secured a landslide victory in 2024 by embracing early voting and increasing voter registration in battleground states.

RELIGION

29 Pope Francis' Subversive Synod on Synodality

by William F. Jasper — Just as a government can be subverted, so can religion. Case in point: the subversive work of the Synod on Synodality.

FAITH, FAMILY, FREEDOM

32 Remembering Patriot & Leader Arthur R. Thompson

by Christian Gomez

HISTORY — PAST AND PERSPECTIVE

37 Jesus of Nazareth

by James J. Drummey — He was born in a stable, never acquired wealth, never ruled an earthly kingdom, and never commanded an army. Yet he changed the world for all time.

THE REVIEW

41 *The Life of John Birch* by Robert H.W. Welch, Jr.

Departments

5 From the Editor

7 Inside Track

9 QuickQuotes

36 The Goodness of America

39 Exercising the Right

44 The Last Word

Midjourney; Gage Skidmore

AP Images

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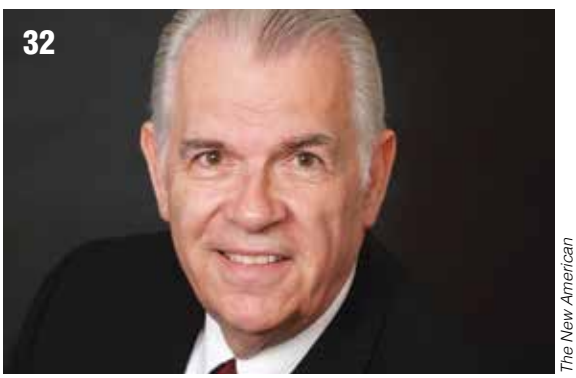

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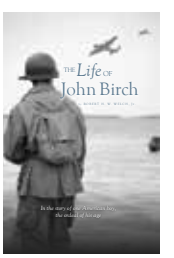

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"What's Past Is Prologue"

The above line, from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, explains as well as anything Donald Trump's recent election-day triumph. Trump was not supposed to win last month, just as he was not supposed to win eight years earlier.

When Trump descended the escalator at Trump Tower in 2015 to announce his first presidential bid, the media did not view him as a viable candidate, despite his wealth and name recognition. *The New York Times* dutifully covered his "improbable quest for the Republican nomination," as did other media, but also observed that his remarks that day "were unlikely to allay suspicions that he is entering the race mainly to appear in debates and win attention from the media."

Trump did get plenty of attention from the media, but most of it was highly negative — and the attacks were directed not only at Trump and his "America First" mantra, but also at the movement he christened "Make America Great Again." The politicos piled on too, such as when Hillary Clinton, his Democratic challenger in 2016, infamously claimed that "you could put half of Trump's supporters into what I call a basket of deplorables…. They're racist, sexist, homophobic, xenophobic, Islamophobic — you name it." By that time the "improbable" candidate had already won the Republican nomination; he went on to win the presidency, as well.

When Trump got to the Oval Office, the attacks did not let up. He was accused of colluding with Russian President Vladimir Putin to win his election, yet the investigation by special prosecutor Robert Mueller found this smear to be baseless. Trump was also accused of fomenting an insurrection on January 6, 2021, even though he had asked his supporters to assemble peacefully. He was impeached by the House — twice.

In 2020, he was voted out of office in an election marred with widespread voting irregularities. Then, after he became a private citizen once again, the law was weaponized against him, and he became a convicted felon. But even that did not stop voters from rallying around him, and he went on to become only the second president in U.S. history to win nonconsecutive terms. In fact, not only did he win, but he won big. He garnered more Electoral College votes than he did in 2016, and became the first Republican presidential candidate to win the popular vote since 2004.

But how was Trump able to get elected president to begin with, let alone a second time, considering all of the smears? One reason is that the American people have grown increasingly distrustful of the major media, and therefore less susceptible to media lies. But another, more fundamental reason is Trump's overarching message. "America First" may be anathema to the Deep State globalists who seek to submerge America into a socialist/communist new world order, but this same mantra resonates with millions of everyday citizens who have supported Trump because of his promise to put America first and make her great again.

The understanding in support of "America First" did not spring out of nothing during Trump's first presidential campaign; it had already been created and fortified via many years of grassroots activism outside political campaigns. The John Birch Society, the parent organization of this magazine, has had much to do with creating this understanding. This is acknowledged by friend and foe alike, including, in the latter camp, *The New Republic*, which published an article in 2021 titled "We All Live in the John Birch Society's World Now," and subtitled, "In his lifetime, [JBS founder] Robert Welch toiled in the mocked and marginal fringe. Today his ideas are the mainstream of the American right." To be clear, we are not yet living in "the John Birch Society's World" — getting there would entail getting the United States out of the UN, ending the Fed, abolishing the income tax, and enforcing the Constitution once again — nor do Trump's positions mirror those of JBS. But the goals of the JBS have become more realistically attainable over time as a result of the understanding that has been created.

The cover story in this issue asks the question, "What's Next?" Well, that depends not only on what Trump and the new Congress do, but also on what you do — in election years and nonelection years alike — to create the understanding so vitally needed for saving our Republic.

— *Gary Benoit*

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Mom Arrested After Son Walks to Small Town Alone

On October 30, Brittany Patterson was arrested after a passing driver called police upon spotting Patterson's son Soren, just shy of 11 years old, strolling along a road alone, reported *Reason's* Lenore Skenazy on November 11.

Around noon that day, Patterson had taken her oldest son to a doctor's appointment. Soren, who was supposed to go along, was nowhere to be found. But Patterson, who lives on 16 acres with several other family members, wasn't concerned. "I figured he was in the woods or at Grandma's house," she said. In reality, Soren was ambling down the road toward Mineral Bluff, a tiny town less than a mile from Patterson's home.

A woman saw Soren walking along the road — whose speed limit varies between 25 and 35 miles per hour — and asked if he was OK. Although he said he was fine, the woman called the police. A Fannin County sheriff picked up Soren and called Patterson. "She asked me if I knew he was downtown, and I said no.… I was not panicking as I know the roads and know he is mature enough to walk there without incident," Patterson said.

The sheriff took Soren home in the afternoon, but returned that evening. Patterson was arrested, jailed, and released on bail. The next day, according to Skenazy, a Fannin County Division of Family and Children's Services (DFCS) case manager visited Patterson and told her "that everything seemed fine." However, "A few days later, DFCS presented Patterson with a 'safety plan' for her to sign. It would require her to delegate a 'safety person' to … watch over the children whenever she leaves home [and] download an app onto her son's phone allowing for his location to be monitored."

According to the assistant district attorney, "If Patterson [signs] the safety plan, the criminal charges [will] be dropped." If she refuses to sign and the state prosecutes, she "could face a reckless conduct charge, a $1,000 fine, and a year in jail." She refuses to sign.

Martin Lemus/iStock/Getty Images Plus

Climate Realists Urge Action by Trump

The *Washington Examiner* reported on November 13 that a coalition of climate-realist and energy-independence groups — The Heartland Institute, E&E Legal Institute, Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow, Truth in Energy and Climate, and The American Energy Institute — has compiled a list of actions for Trump to take when he resumes office in January.

First on their list is a repudiation of the Paris Agreement by declaring it a treaty: "Determine that the Paris climate agreement is properly a treaty (rather than a mere 'Executive agreement') that requires Senate ratification. Transmit the treaty to the Senate for its advice. This … will legally relieve the US of any and all obligations under the treaty until and unless the Senate formally ratifies it."

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Any treaty must be confirmed by a two-thirds majority of the Senate — which is now controlled by the GOP. Trump has already signaled that he would remove the nation from the agreement, as he did during his first term, but by having the agreement declared a treaty, the group hopes to make it more difficult for future administrations to use it for policymaking.

Next would be to "repeal the Obama/Biden EPA determination that carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases are threats to the public health and welfare," then to end the war climate zealots have waged on the oil, gas, and coal industries: "Restore active federal oil and gas leasing on federal lands and offshore.… Reverse the Biden moratorium on federal leasing for coal mining.… End the Biden moratorium on LNG export terminals." They also advise Trump to "terminate all existing federal science advisory boards and reconstitute only the ones legally required [and] appoint qualified and pro-energy individuals to the boards."

Many of the suggestions from the climate realists involve rolling back the administrative state's unconstitutional takeover of responsibilities that rightfully belong to Congress. For decades now, the alphabet agencies have usurped congressional authority in rulemaking for the federal government. If the new Trump administration is able to stem that tide, it will have done a great thing.

Illinois Assault-weapons Ban Overturned

On November 8, a Trump-nominated judge permanently enjoined the state of Illinois from enforcing its "assault weapons" ownership and registration scheme that was implemented in January 2023. The excuse for the ban was the Highland Park parade shooting on July 4, 2022, but its real purpose was defiance of the Supreme Court's 2022 ruling in *New York State Rifle & Pistol Association, Inc. v. Bruen*. The decision in *Bruen* radically changed the legal landscape by requiring states such as Illinois to justify any infringement of the Second Amendment with historical analogues.

Several lawsuits were immediately filed contesting the state's scheme, titled the "Protect Illinois Communities Act," or PICA. In March 2023, District Court Judge Stephen McGlynn, nominated to his present position in September 2020 by then-President Donald Trump, ruled in *Barnett v. Raoul* that PICA is unconstitutional.

In November 2023, though, a three-judge panel of the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals reversed McGlynn's ruling, claiming that, as explained by The Reload on November 8, "semiautomatic AR-15s and the magazines that come standard with them are not 'arms' under the Second Amendment because they are 'indistinguishable' from their fully-automatic counterparts."

In September this year, following instructions from the Supreme Court, a trial commenced on *Barnett*. The result of that trial was McGlynn's current ruling, in which he noted, "What is particularly disturbing is that … weapons that are commonly owned and used by citizens [i.e., AR-15s] are now banned, depriving citizens of a principal means to defend themselves and their property in situations where a handgun or shotgun alone would not be the citizen's preferred arm."

"PICA is an unconstitutional affront to the Second Amendment and must be enjoined. The government may not deprive law-abiding citizens of their guaranteed right to self-defense," he concluded. McGlynn not only enjoined the state from enforcing the ban on "assault" weapons, but also declared the registration scheme included in the law unconstitutional.

Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker has asked his attorney general to appeal McGlynn's ruling to the Supreme Court.

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Connecticut Teacher Threatens Trump Voters

Pichsakul Promrungsee/iStock/Getty Images Plus

A Connecticut teacher threatened to harm or kill supporters of President-elect Donald Trump, reported online newsroom Inside Investigator on November 13.

In a profane video posted to TikTok after Trump's victory and addressed to his supporters, Annie Dunleavy, a special education teacher at Chapman Elementary School in Cheshire, Connecticut, first expressed her fear that "people of color, and poor people, and gay people, and all the people that I care about aren't going to be safe in America." She then vowed to "remember" those who voted for Trump, and threatened to put them "on a stretcher, gone, forever." She continued, "Nobody … talk to me unless you wanna swing. If you wanna fight, text me, call me, whatever…. If you voted for Trump, literally, please delete me, block me, get rid of everything of me. Or step to me, so that I know what's up. And I can handle you how I see fit."

As of November 11, the video had "2.4 million views, 7,000 comments, and 27,000 retweets. Posts on X made by the school that had nothing to do with this issue, suddenly had hundreds of posts calling for Dunleavy to be fired," said Inside Investigator.

Prior to Dunleavy's resignation, Cheshire Superintendent of Schools Jeffrey Solan told parents and teachers that she had been removed from the premises due to the controversy. "It is immediately clear that it will be impossible to conduct business as usual for our students and staff without temporarily removing the teacher from the building, so we have done so until the outcome of the investigation."

Getting involved in the issue was GOP state Senator Rob Sampson, who wrote to Solan. "The hostile language and clear threats expressed in this video … raise questions about [Dunleavy's] judgment and her ability to foster a safe, inclusive environment for all students," he explained. "Parents are deeply worried about the potential threat she may pose to their children and the broader school community, including fellow teachers and staff."

Dunleavy resigned on November 13. ■

QUICK QUOTES

Though Christmas is generally associated with peace to men of good will, there are plenty who bear ill will toward the holiday. Following are some lumps of coal that the latter have left under the tree at one time or another.

"Forasmuch as the Feasts of the Nativity of Christ, Easter, Whitsuntide, and other Festivals, commonly called Holy-days, have been heretofore superstitiously used and observed, be it ordained, that the said Feasts, and all other Holy-days, be no longer observed as festivals; any law, statute, custom, constitution, or canon to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding."

This **ordinance**, *passed in 1647 by the British Parliament, was effectively repealed in 1660 when Charles II ascended the throne.*

"From 1789 to 1799, the holiday went underground. Religious services were banned and carols were altered 'by substituting names of political leaders for royal characters in the lyrics, such as the Three Kings.' The anti-clerical laws even affected pastries. In the aftermath of the French Revolution, the Galette des Rois (King Cake) was briefly replaced with the Gâteau de l'Égalité (Cake of Equality).... Christmas was rechristened Le Jour Du Chien (Dog Day)."

Writing for HistoryBuff.com in 2015, **Julia Mason** *detailed atrocities hurled against the holy season by perpetrators of the Reign of Terror.*

"The Court will address plaintiff's seasonal confusion erroneously believing Christmas merely a religious institution.

Whatever the reason constitutional or other,
Christmas is not an act of Big Brother!

Christmas is about joy and giving and sharing,
it is about the child within us, it is most about caring!

One is never jailed for not having a tree,
for not going to church, for not spreading glee!

The Court will uphold seemingly contradictory causes,
decreeing "the establishment" and "Santa" both worthwhile "Claus(es)!"

We are all better for Santa, the Easter bunny too,
and maybe the great pumpkin, to name just a few!

An extra day off is hardly high treason.

It may be spent as you wish, regardless of reason.

The Court having read the lessons of "Lynch"
refuses to play the role of the Grinch!

There is room in this country and in all our hearts too,
for different convictions and a day off too!

In 1998, an Ohio activist sued the government, claiming that making Christmas Day a federal holiday violated the Establishment Clause. District Judge **Susan Dlott** *stood up against this would-be grinch, writing part of her opinion in the style of Dr. Seuss. Her reference to "Lynch" indicates a 1984 U.S. Supreme Court decision.*

"We would warn the young against giving countenance to such a Romanist practice as that of observing Christmas."

The **Northern Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland***: Opinion in the case of John Murray, 1935*

— Compiled by Rebecca Terrell

HISTORIC VICTORIES
WHAT'S NEXT?

The MAGA movement won big in the November elections. However, the fight to keep our Republic is only getting started.

by Peter Rykowski

It's safe to say that the U.S. presidential election was the single most anticipated event in the country — and possibly the world — this year. The election campaign itself was riveting, featuring politically motivated criminal prosecutions, the abrupt replacement of the Democratic Party candidate, two attempted assassinations, and much more. And it culminated in Donald Trump's return as U.S. president. Four turbulent years after Trump was ousted in a rigged election in which Deep State bureaucrats, Big Tech, and the media worked together to defeat him, he is back — and in a prime position to advance his "Make America Great Again" agenda.

However, the presidential election was only one of many elections on November 5. In addition to the races for U.S. House and Senate, voters decided the outcomes of most state legislatures, several governorships, and dozens of state ballot measures, among others. Although many Americans have been led to view the presidency as an all-powerful office, under the American form of government, the down-ballot elections are far more consequential for determining our nation's trajectory, and have a much greater impact on people's everyday lives.

The Founding Fathers designed a government with robust checks and balances — both within the federal government and between the federal and state governments. In *The Federalist*, No. 51, James Madison noted that under the Constitution, the federal government is divided "into distinct and separate departments" in order to "oblige it to control itself," and the United States is "divided between two distinct governments" — the federal government and the states. This system, Madison noted, provides "a double security … to the rights of the people." Congress and the states must reclaim the constitutional authority that they have lost over the last century.

What's next for America? Although the elections have passed, the fight to protect our Constitution, national sovereignty, and God-given rights is far from over. Although the election results provide additional hope that we can keep our Republic, the hard — but essential — work of creating an informed electorate and influencing elected officials to act in accordance with the Constitution must continue.

Peter Rykowski is a research associate for The John Birch Society, managing JBS's legislative alerts, and is editor of the JBS Bulletin.

Trump Returns

Americans fixated on the presidential race between Trump and Vice President Kamala Harris, who abruptly replaced President Joe Biden as the Democratic candidate in July after the latter's cognitive decline became too obvious to deny. Trump won decisively, winning all seven swing states and receiving 312 electoral votes to Harris' 226. He also won the popular vote, the first time in 20 years a Republican nominee has done so.

Trump made significant gains across the country. Every state and the vast majority of counties swung in his direction compared to the 2020 election. For example, Texas, which Democrats have spent years trying to turn blue, swung more than eight points toward Trump, and Florida solidified its increasingly Republican tilt. Trump even performed well in deep-blue states, obtaining the best Republican performance in New Jersey since 1992, and in Illinois and New York since 1988. Trump performed particularly well among Hispanics, with Hispanic-majority counties swinging an average of 13.3 points toward him, according to a *New York Times* report. For example, Trump swept Texas' Rio Grande Valley, historically a solidly Democratic region. He won Starr County, Texas, the most Hispanic county in the United States (97 percent of its residents are Hispanic), with 58 percent of the vote; this was the first time it voted for a Republican presidential nominee since 1892. In a country and an era so divided, Trump performed indisputably well.

The decisive results give Trump momentum to implement his America First agenda. Among key pledges, he has promised to reverse the Biden administration's open-border policies, restart construction of the border wall, and carry out mass deportations of illegal aliens. His immigration-related appointments, particularly Tom Homan as border czar and Stephen Miller as deputy chief of staff for policy, have established records of strongly opposing mass migration. Trump can do much on immigration without Congress, including slashing refugee admissions, building additional border wall, tightening border enforcement via programs such as Remain in Mexico, and empowering Immigration and Customs Enforcement to increase migrant arrests and deportations. However, all these executive actions could be quickly reversed by a future administration, and Trump's ability to

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Four more years: Donald Trump faced intense opposition from the Establishment to his 2024 reelection bid as U.S. president — yet he beat the odds. His decisive victory gives him momentum to advance the America First agenda that he campaigned on.

massively ramp up deportations is limited without additional personnel and resources. He will need congressional legislation to implement more lasting reforms.

Trump will shift U.S. foreign policy to prioritize national interests, but it isn't clear how far he'll go. During his first term, he withdrew the United States from the Paris climate agreement and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; and initiated U.S. withdrawal from the World Health Organization (WHO). Trump is expected to repeat these actions. However, he has been silent on full UN withdrawal, and indicated he won't try to leave NATO, a UN subsidiary. Additionally, many of Trump's foreign-policy picks have neocon leanings. According to *The New American's* Freedom Index, U.S. Senator Marco Rubio (R-Fla.), nominee for secretary of state; U.S. Representative Michael Waltz (R-Fla.), appointee for national security advisor; and Elise Stefanik (R-N.Y.), nominee for ambassador to the United Nations, generally support foreign entanglements. Nonetheless, the incoming administration is set to be the most skeptical of foreign entanglements in decades.

On the size and scope of government, Trump has already made encouraging moves. For example, he has appointed Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy to lead the newly created Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), which will recommend cutting federal bureaucracy, spending, and regulations. Musk previously advocated cutting the federal budget by at least $2 trillion. Trump also plans to "clean out the Deep State" and "end the ongoing weaponization of the justice system," and his nominations indicate he is serious. He will also prioritize extending and expanding his 2017 tax cuts, and has even floated abolishing income taxes and replacing them with tariffs. Trump will need congressional legislation to cut taxes and abolish federal agencies, and it isn't likely that Congress will agree to fully abolish income taxes, but he has considerable leeway to rein in the administrative state and cut regulations.

Trump has threatened to massively raise tariffs on imports from China, Mexico, and other countries. While he is expected to raise tariffs as president, this may partially be a negotiating stance that's already bearing fruit: In the days following the election, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen suggested purchasing more U.S. liquefied natural gas to avoid tariffs. Trump also has pledged to reinvigorate domestic energy production, particularly oil and gas drilling, and reverse Biden's radical "net zero" policies.

AP Images

Back to business: Trump's immigration-related appointments, including Tom Homan, indicate he will implement his agenda more boldly than during his first term. Other picks, however, including Marco Rubio and Michael Waltz, have neocon or globalist records.

Not all of Trump's proposals uphold America's founding principles. For example, in his "Free Speech Policy Initiative," Trump promised multiple actions to combat censorship. While some, such as ending federal funding of nonprofit organizations that support censorship, uphold constitutional principles, others, such as asking Congress to pass a "digital bill of rights," would merely increase unconstitutional federal interference in the private sector. Trump has also voiced support for congressional term limits, which would fail to meaningfully rein in federal overreach. In fact, they would push out constitutionalist congressmen along with Establishment members. And if Congress fails to pass a term-limits amendment, Trump's advocacy could encourage state legislatures to apply for a dangerous federal constitutional convention.

Meanwhile, Trump has promised "to invoke the six-year renegotiation provision of the USMCA [United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement]" to improve it. However, the USMCA, which originally went into effect during Trump's first term and builds upon the North American Free Trade Agreement, threatens U.S. sovereignty. Trump would be better served abandoning it altogether. These positions illustrate that while Trump's proposals may be well-intentioned, they don't always align with constitutional principles, and some would create new problems in an effort to solve existing ones.

Americans should vigilantly monitor the policies the Trump administration promotes and implements. In his victory speech on election night, Trump declared, "We're going to fix everything about our country, and we've made history for a reason tonight." How he follows through will determine the direction our country takes.

Congress Is Key

In order to implement much of his agenda, Trump will need a supportive Congress. On issues ranging from taxes and spending to foreign policy, he can do relatively little without congressional legislation. The Founding Fathers intentionally designed our system this way; Article I, Section 1 of the U.S. Constitution unequivocally declares, "All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States." Although Congress has un-

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Constitutionalist cadre: Although long a rare species, there now exists an increasingly influential group of congressmen who consistently vote according to the Constitution. Their number will likely grow when the incoming Congress convenes in January.

constitutionally ceded much of its power to the Executive Branch over the last century, the Constitution is clear, and Congress has a clear role to play in Trump's second term.

Republicans won control of the U.S. Senate and narrowly held on to the U.S. House of Representatives this year, boosting Trump's ability to enact aspects of his agenda. Republican control of the Senate is also key to confirming Trump's judicial nominees. If he continues his first-term policy of nominating originalist judges, this will prove decisive in impeding leftist judicial activism.

Although most Americans focus on the political-party affiliation of their congressmen, it is far more important whether they follow the Constitution. In fact, most have poor constitutional adherence, as tracked by *The New American's* Freedom Index. However, in recent years, there has been a small but growing cadre of representatives and senators who consistently follow the Constitution — and they performed well in the elections. For example, representatives with near-perfect Freedom Index scores handily won reelection, including Thomas Massie (R-Ky.), Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-Ga.), Andy Biggs (R-Ariz.), and Josh Brecheen (R-Okla.).

In some races, victory was far from guaranteed, but the constitutionalist candidates pulled through. For example, Representative Lauren Boebert's (R-Colo.) reelection appeared highly in doubt earlier this year amid personal issues and a competitive congressional district. However, she was reelected, albeit in a more conservative district. Additionally, Representative Scott Perry (R-Pa.), a former Freedom Caucus chairman with a respectable 81-percent Freedom Index score, narrowly eked out a win in Pennsylvania's 10th District; his race had been rated a "toss-up."

This constitutionalist cadre also appears set to grow. For example, former Michigan state Senator Tom Barrett, who received a *TNA* Legislative Scorecard rating of 100 percent, was elected to the House in Michigan's 7th District, while Freedom Caucus-endorsed candidates Nick Begich III (R-Alaska), Brandon Gill (R-Texas), and Bob Onder (R-Mo.) also won seats, replacing either Democrats or Establishment Republicans.

Not every constitutionalist candidate won election though. For example, former U.S. Representative Yvette Herrell (R-N.M.), who had a 92-percent Freedom Index score, failed to make a comeback in the House. Additionally, Representative Bob Good (R-Va.), who holds an impressive 99-percent Freedom Index score, lost his primary after Trump endorsed his opponent. Meanwhile, the House and Senate GOP leadership will continue to be composed of Establishment politicians (incoming Senate Majority Leader John Thune of South Dakota holds a 56-percent lifetime Freedom Index score). Overall, however, constitutionalists made gains, particularly in the House — and because of the narrow partisan split in both chambers, they appear likely to wield a disproportionately high level of influence in the next Congress.

How will congressional Republicans use their new majorities? As noted above, the Senate will focus on confirming Trump's judicial nominees. Additionally, Congress will prioritize extending and expanding Trump's 2017 tax cuts, which expire next year, and may repeal parts of Biden's misnamed 2022 Inflation Reduction Act. Under current congressional rules, all this can be done with a simple majority in the Senate. Congress will also seek to reinforce Trump's immigration actions by increasing funding. However, its ability to act on this issue without facing the Senate filibuster is limited.

Federal spending will be a major issue in the next Congress. With a trifecta in Washington, Republicans will have greater leverage in spending negotiations, and the Freedom Caucus will push to reduce spending. House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-La.) has reportedly said the House won't pass additional Ukraine funding. However, GOP appropriations subcommittee chairmen have previously resisted attempts to modestly cut funding, and Republican leadership has continued ramming through omnibus and

continuing-appropriations bills, despite repeated promises to the contrary. Current federal spending is severely bloated, and the vast majority of it is unconstitutional. Congress should take this opportunity to advance genuine spending reductions, as well as abolish unconstitutional agencies such as the Department of Education.

Other opportunities exist. With a president and a historically large number of congressmen espousing an America First philosophy, next year will present the best opportunity yet to get the United States out of the UN and other entangling alliances. Progress toward this goal already exists. In the outgoing 118th Congress, Representative Chip Roy (R-Texas) and Senator Mike Lee (R-Utah) introduced the Disengaging Entirely From the United Nations Debacle (DEFUND) Act, which would fully withdraw the United States from the UN. This was the first time UN-withdrawal legislation had been introduced in both the House and Senate. Every sponsor and cosponsor — except Senator Mike Braun (R-Ind.), who was elected governor of Indiana — has been reelected, and can advance similar legislation in the incoming Congress.

Another opportunity is auditing and ultimately abolishing the Federal Reserve. Inflation is at the top of most Americans' minds, and the Federal Reserve is one of its primary causes due to its ability to devalue the U.S. dollar. In the outgoing Congress, legislation to audit the Federal Reserve (the Federal Reserve Transparency Act) and abolish it entirely (the Federal Reserve Board Abolition Act) was introduced in the House and Senate. Furthermore, in November 2023, the U.S. Senate narrowly defeated (in a 46-51 vote) an effort to audit the Fed. Next year, Congress will have a better opportunity to advance these key measures.

Will Congress take advantage of these opportunities? There's no guarantee it will. In 2017, as Trump began his first term, Republicans also held majorities in Congress. However, despite passing tax cuts, Congress failed to repeal ObamaCare, reduce spending, abolish federal agencies, or advance UN-withdrawal legislation. In fact, Congress actually increased spending. Americans must not let this happen again. In a post on X, Representative Massie declared, "With MAJORITIES in the House and the Senate, we should have at least a dozen bills to shrink government overreach on [Trump's] desk awaiting his signature by the first day of his term." Americans should press their representatives and senators to follow suit and advance limited-government policies that uphold the Constitution.

State Government

Although most Americans focus on elections for president and Congress, state elections are just as important, if not more so. State government has a major impact on people's everyday lives, including on issues such as property rights, abortion, law enforcement, and election integrity. The Founding Fathers designed a limited federal government, and intended the states to retain the vast majority of powers. In *The Federalist*, No. 45, Madison noted that the federal government's constitutional powers are "few and defined," while the states' retained powers are "numerous and indefinite." The 10th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution extinguishes any ambiguity by declaring, "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people." Accordingly, it's important to ensure that our state officials uphold America's founding principles and work to safeguard state sovereignty from federal usurpations.

Overall, Republicans performed well in state elections. In most state legislative races, they either held steady or made gains. Republicans won control of the Michigan House, and tied with Democrats in the Minnesota House. They cemented their newfound dominance in Florida, maintaining supermajorities in the state Legislature. Republicans also expanded their majorities on the supreme courts of North Carolina and Ohio. And in California, George Soros-supported Los Angeles County District Attorney George Gascón, who had implemented far-left crime policies, lost his reelection bid to Nathan Hochman, who ran on a more tough-on-crime platform. However, Republicans notably failed to gain North Carolina's governorship, as GOP nominee Mark Robinson lost to Democrat Josh Stein by more than 14 points.

Republicans performed particularly strongly down-ballot in Texas, impeding Democrats' efforts to make inroads in the state. In addition to U.S. Senator Ted Cruz's comfortable nine-point victory, Republicans swept all state-level and many local races, expanding their legislative majorities and maintaining their hold on the state judiciary. Notably, Supreme Court Justice John Devine, an outspoken constitutional-

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Return to sanity: In a bright spot for law and order, Los Angeles County voters ousted far-left District Attorney George Gascón, who implemented pro-criminal policies and received support from George Soros. His replacement, Nathan Hochman, supports tougher criminal-justice policies.

ist, won reelection despite Democratic and Establishment Republican attempts to unseat him. Additionally, the Rio Grande Valley's red shift extended to the state level, as Republican Adam Hinojosa won election to the Texas Senate's 27th District, becoming the first Republican state senator to represent any part of the region since 1874.

In some states, the election outcomes extended deeper than mere political-party affiliation, as constitutionalists made historic gains. Most prominently, the Wyoming Freedom Caucus, which advocates limited government and constitutional adherence, gained a majority in the state House, with about 34 members in the 62-seat chamber. Most of these gains were made in the August primary elections, when multiple Freedom Caucus-endorsed candidates defeated Establishment-backed Republicans. Additionally, Freedom Caucus-oriented members won a majority in the Wyoming Senate, likely paving the way for more liberty-minded legislation next year.

Not every competitive election saw constitutionalist victories, though. For example, U.S. Representative Dan Bishop (R-N.C.), who holds a 93-percent Freedom Index score, narrowly lost his race for state attorney general. Additionally, the Left flipped a seat on Kentucky's Supreme Court, a setback for judicial restraint.

As state legislatures convene next year, there are both opportunities and risks. For example, many legislatures will have opportunities to enforce the U.S. Constitution by refusing to follow (i.e., nullifying) unconstitutional federal acts. Article VI of the Constitution declares that state legislators, executive officials, and judges "shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution." They have a duty to reject laws that violate it. Multiple states have recently enacted robust nullification legislation, such as Missouri's 2021 Second Amendment Preservation Act, which nullifies a wide range of federal gun-control laws, and Utah's 2024 Utah Constitutional Sovereignty Act, which created a formal process for rejecting unconstitutional federal acts. Meanwhile, strong "state sovereignty" bills have been introduced in Tennessee, Texas, and Wyoming. Legislators and other state officials should follow their oaths by nullifying unconstitutional federal laws.

Similarly, states can push back against the United Nations. In the last two years, three states — Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Tennessee — have enacted legislation doing just that. The former two states' laws declare that the UN, WHO, and World Economic Forum "shall have no jurisdiction" in their respective states; while the latter's prohibits state or local government entities from implementing UN programs such as Agenda 2030. Legislators should build upon these efforts by enacting similar legislation that protects individual and property rights from the UN and UN-inspired programs.

AP Images

Red wave: The Republican Party largely performed well in down-ballot races. This was especially true in Texas, where Senator Ted Cruz decisively won reelection and Republicans swept state and local races.

Article I, Section 10 of the Constitution declares that "no State shall … make any Thing but gold and silver Coin a Tender in Payment of Debts." Five states (Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Utah, and Wyoming) have taken a step toward complying with this provision by enacting legislation that declares gold and silver as legal tender. Others have enacted legislation nullifying the unconstitutional Federal Reserve, encouraging the use of precious metals as currency, and banning a potential central bank digital currency. Legislators should continue pursuing such legislation until their states fully comply with the Constitution.

Although Trump is poised to crack down on illegal immigration, states can do likewise. Since December 2023, Iowa, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas have enacted laws criminalizing illegal immigration. Other states should follow suit and eliminate all government benefits to illegal aliens, including driver's licenses, in-state college tuition, and social welfare. And states must ensure trustworthy elections by enacting robust election-integrity legislation. Such measures include ending early and mail-in voting, abolishing automatic voter registration, and requiring paper ballots. State legislatures have so far failed to enact substantive election-integrity laws, but they should act now to secure future elections. On these and other issues, states have good opportunities to uphold constitutional principles.

On the other hand, states also risk implementing false solutions. For example, one can expect a heavy push in more than a dozen states to pass new applications for a federal constitutional convention, or Con-Con, under Article V of the U.S. Constitution. Although federal usurpations result from lack of adherence to the Constitution, a Con-Con threatens to entirely do away with the founding document and its limited-government provisions. Additionally, multiple states, most prominently Texas, will consider proposals for school vouchers and Education Savings Accounts. Although such proposals, which have seen increased momentum in recent years, may appear to be a step toward "school choice," they would actually strengthen government control over nonpublic-school options. Multiple states have sought to deter illegal immigration by mandating E-Verify. However, E-Verify is a federal program that unconstitutionally regulates employment for

all U.S. residents and is a first step toward a national ID. States must avoid false solutions, and instead pursue measures that reapply America's founding principles.

Meanwhile, Democrat-controlled states are poised to continue implementing far-left policies. For example, California Governor Gavin Newsom has already called a special session "to protect civil rights, reproductive freedom, climate action, and immigrant families." Other governors, including J.B. Pritzker of Illinois, Maura Healey of Massachusetts, and Kathy Hochul of New York, have pledged similar action. Regardless of the situations in their states, Americans must vigilantly ensure that their officials uphold constitutional principles. While Donald Trump works to Make America Great Again — as constitutionalists hope he will — state officials should work to Make America STATES Again by nullifying federal usurpations and restoring a republican form of government at the state level.

Ballot Measures

In the elections, voters decided on 146 ballot measures in 41 states, including 57 citizen-initiated measures that bypassed the regular legislative process. The results were a mixed bag for liberty-minded Americans. Positively, eight states — Idaho, Iowa, Kentucky, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Wisconsin — voted to constitutionally prohibit noncitizens from voting in state elections. Additionally, voters rejected ranked-choice voting and jungle primaries in nearly every state where these measures appeared on the ballot. South Dakota voters overturned a state law favoring carbon-capture pipelines at the expense of property rights and local setback ordinances. And of the hundreds of local ballot measures, voters in leftist Berkeley, California — of all places — chose overwhelmingly to reject a new tax on buildings that use natural gas.

However, many ballot measures also went against U.S. founding principles. For example, of the 10 states with abortion referendums on the ballot, seven of them voted to enshrine radical pro-abortion provisions — state-sanctioned murder of preborn children — in their state constitutions, including the conservative-leaning states of Arizona, Missouri, and Montana. Additionally, Colorado voters approved a constitutionally problematic 6.5-percent tax on firearm and ammunition sales, and Washington voters rejected a measure to repeal the state's cap-and-trade program.

These results illustrate the dangers of direct democracy. The Founding Fathers designed the United States as a constitutional republic, and repeatedly warned against democracy. For example, Madison wrote in *The Federalist*, No. 10, "Democracies have ever been spectacles of turbulence and contention; have ever been found incompatible with personal security or the rights of property; and have in general been as short in their lives as they have been violent in their deaths." Unlike republics, which operate under the rule of law and protect God-given rights, democracies operate under majority rule, even if the resulting decisions violate individual freedom. Statewide popular initiatives, which bypass state legislators (the people's elected representatives) and did not even exist before 1898, are a dangerous step away from republican government and toward democracy. (To learn more about the problems of direct democracy, read the article "Restore State Government," originally published in the October 14, 2024 issue of *The New American*.)

Legislators and citizens should work to repeal direct democracy and restore a republican form of government in their states. Attempts to rein in the ballot-measure process have occasionally been successful, such as a 2006 measure in Florida to raise the threshold for approving ballot measures to a 60-percent supermajority. Ironically, such reforms require a popular vote to pass, so it is essential to create an informed electorate that understands America's founding principles.

AP Images

Tyranny of the majority: Democracy is antithetical to God-given rights, and frequently leads to excessive government overreach. Colorado's ballot measure imposing a 6.5-percent tax on firearms and ammunition serves as a recent example of this.

What's Next: Taking Action

Now that the elections are behind us, the hardest — but most important — work begins: making sure that our elected officials implement policies that uphold U.S. founding principles. Although it's tempting to sit back and relax after an election that largely delivered good news for liberty-minded Americans, it's essential that we hold our officials accountable and ensure they don't waste opportunities to enact limited-government legislation. Representative Massie emphasized this point in a post on X on November 6: "We must not squander this moment in history. The fight has just begun."

The Montana Legislature over the last two years provides a cautionary example of the importance of not squandering opportunities. In 2022, the Republican Party gained supermajorities in both the state House and

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Getting to work: In order to secure limited-government legislative victories, Americans must get involved in the effort to create an informed electorate and influence their elected officials. The reprint "Make America STATES Again" is an excellent resource to inform state legislators.

Senate, the first time it had done so since the Great Depression. The party gained enough seats to propose state constitutional amendments, or even scrap the state constitution entirely, without Democratic support. This was important, since Montana's constitution, adopted in 1972, is basically a leftist document that enshrines multiple big-government and technocratic policies. However, largely because of a cohort of moderate Republicans, the Legislature failed to pass a single amendment, even on politically easy topics such as strengthening protections for the right to keep and bear arms. According to Kyle Schmauch, spokesman for the Senate Republican Caucus, after the November 5 elections, "nothing happened last session that took a supermajority to accomplish." In the elections, the Republican Party lost multiple seats due to redistricting, and is now far short of a supermajority. This is what a wasted opportunity looks like.

So, what must we do? First, we must hold our elected officials accountable to the U.S. Constitution and American founding principles. There's no guarantee that they will obey their oath "to support this Constitution"; in fact, it's rare that legislators — of either party — do. For this reason, *The New American* publishes the Freedom Index and Congressional Scorecards for U.S. representatives and senators, and Legislative Scorecards for state legislators. These scorecards, available for free at TheFreedomIndex.org, rate federal and state legislators based on their adherence to constitutional principles. Print and distribute them to your fellow citizens and legislators to create an informed electorate.

In addition to creating awareness about legislators' records, we must influence them to vote constitutionally on pending legislation. This includes regularly contacting and meeting with them to advocate for or against those bills. The John Birch Society, the parent organization of *The New American*, publishes legislative alerts about the most important bills — covering a wide range of topics — in both Congress and state legislatures. Visit JBS.org/alerts to view and subscribe to them. Use these alerts to easily contact your officials, and share them with your fellow citizens to get them involved.

One of the most important topics is getting the United States out of the UN. Take advantage of the rising tide of Americanism by urging your incoming U.S. representative and senators to reintroduce and enact UN-withdrawal legislation such as the DEFUND Act. The John Birch Society is already gearing up for this effort. According to JBS President Martin Ohlson, "Our opportunity to finally get out of the UN is greater than ever. In the coming months, The John Birch Society will be massively ramping up its *Get US Out!* campaign to pressure Congress to fully restore U.S. sovereignty." Getting out of the UN would strike a major blow to globalism, so press Congress to act quickly.

Conservative-leaning state legislators may be tempted to put bold, limited-government legislation on the back burner, since someone on "their side" has been elected president. We must not allow this. The massive buildup of federal and state acts that violate the U.S. Constitution and contradict American founding principles did not happen overnight, and is not the result of one person or political party. Simply having a good president in office will not reverse these policies. Accordingly, urge your state legislators to intensify their efforts to nullify unconstitutional federal laws and restore a republican form of government at the state level. The John Birch Society publishes a wide array of resources to help you inform your elected officials; a highly recommended tool for state legislators is the "Make America STATES Again" reprint. This and other tools are available on ShopJBS.org (see also page 28).

All these actions require organization to be most effective. The John Birch Society, founded in 1958, exists to provide that organization, as well as inform people about the core threats to American freedom and independence. As Donald Trump takes office next year, and Congress and state legislatures convene, the JBS will stand at the forefront of advocating constitutional principles and holding elected officials accountable to their oaths of office. But we need your help and participation to accomplish this — we will not win if patriots sit on the sidelines. If you are motivated to take action to protect our constitutional Republic, we invite you to join our efforts. Begin by visiting JBS.org/join. ■

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The Most Important Votes Are Yet to Be Cast

The choices we make in our daily lives shape our culture and the type of country we have. After all, politics is downstream from culture.

by Selwyn Duke

With President Donald Trump's historic and resounding election victory, many are relieved. His supporters may feel, "Mission accomplished!" while his opponents (those not throwing tantrums) might've resigned themselves to reality. There's a sense that we can breathe easier now, relax, and return to "life as normal." Yet overlooked is that the most important ballots are yet to be cast.

What am I talking about? We cast votes every time we buy a product or service, pay for a movie or imbibe other entertainment, watch a news broadcast, purchase a newspaper or view a website, use a search engine, send a child to a school or college, or express a belief. These choices are daily "votes" because they determine what will prevail in our culture. If a news station peddles propaganda, a university destructively indoctrinates youth, a corporation funds perverse agendas, or a Big Tech company nefariously influences our elections, it's only because too many of us are patronizing it in some way. If the entity's customers/users disappeared, so would it. If activists are effectively spreading destructive ideas, it's only because too many of us are tolerating it. In other words, our daily market/social-realm votes serve to *shape our culture*, and this matters because, as the late Andrew Breitbart famously put it, "Politics is downstream from culture."

Under representative government, you cannot do politically what's rendered impossible culturally. Moreover, while elections are important, how much substantive and *enduring* change will a political outcome deliver if our culture continues deteriorating? To analogize it, conceptualize civilization as being like a large ship. This ship is steadily drifting toward a great waterfall at the ends of the Earth (or, to use our conventional terminology, is drifting "left"), at whose plunge-pool terminus lies the final resting place of deceased civilizations. This drift is cultural movement, but there is political movement, too, where on the ship itself people move left or right. And being on the right side is preferable, as the starboard view is that of the promised land. Yet even if you can stay on the vessel's right side, the steady drift ensures that this land of milk and honey becomes ever more distant, ever more elusive — and that, without restoring the culture, destruction will draw ever nearer.

And, oh, our culture is listing badly. Our most recently appointed Supreme Court justice answered the question of what a woman is with, "I am not a biologist." One could wonder, too, if she'd say she knows what a dog is; she isn't, after all, a veterinarian or zoologist, either. And how could she possibly adjudicate whether a person was a victim of sex discrimination if she could not know definitively what the person's sex was? Perhaps we could hear a defense attorney now: "We contend, your honor, that our client cannot be guilty of shutting plaintiff out of an 'old boys' network' because the assertion that plaintiff is a woman is unproven — and neither you nor plaintiff's counsel nor I is a biologist."

Really, though, can we completely blame Ketanji Brown Jackson? She almost assuredly knows what a woman is. At her confirmation hearings in 2022, however, she was responding to a pseudo-elite cultural imperative: Kowtowing to the MUSS (Made-up Sexual Status, aka "transgender") agenda, which holds that we must respect men who "identify" as women and not espouse a definition of "woman" that would exclude them. This agenda says a little boy or girl can become the opposite sex just by willing it and that, if we dispute this, we're bigots. This agenda also insists that schools must aid children in "transitioning" — behind their parents' backs

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Peer pressure: That Biden SCOTUS pick Ketanji Brown Jackson essentially said she couldn't answer the question "What is a woman?" illustrates not her ignorance — but cultural pressure's power. Conservatives must, somehow, start wielding this weapon themselves.

if necessary — for their mental health's sake. This agenda further demands that males claiming female status must be allowed in girls' and women's sports and locker rooms. Of course, this agenda is far from the only indicator of cultural decay, but nothing illustrates ours better. For however detached from reality Jackson is, she's not nearly as crazy as the cultural forces to which she was compelled to genuflect. Oh, there's one more thing about this agenda: The wider population has not effectively scorned and ostracized those pushing it, which is why they could push it. Americans at large didn't cancel the sexual devolutionaries — before the sexual devolutionaries could cancel them. And, yes, unlike wealth creation/distribution, culture wars *are* a zero-sum game governed by a simple rule: If you don't control the culture, the culture will ultimately control you.

Now, many have said that with the 2024 election, America "has moved right." But all movement is relative. If we were on the "right," we should ask: On the right of what? Are we merely on the right of the people on the left side of that left-drifting ship? The reality is that the only consistent definitions of "liberal" and "conservative" relate to, respectively, "a desire to change the status quo" and "a desire to preserve the status quo." Hence, as the status quo changes, so do the policy positions characterizing "liberal" and "conservative" in the given time and place. This is why European "conservatives" are more like our moderate liberals, often embracing, for example, nationalized healthcare and a so-called right to abortion ("so-called" because it violates the unborn baby's right to life), and socially "liberal" positions generally. It's why while a 1950s American conservative was staunchly anti-communist, a Soviet conservative at the time *was* a communist. Yet who determines the status quo? Under representative government especially, it reflects the consensus positions of the people, of course; it reflects the *culture*. This determines the practical political spectrum, which itself is reflected by the "Overton window," i.e., "the range of acceptable political discourse." This window has widened noticeably in America in recent years in *both* directions (to use our lacking left-right way of framing matters), for good *and* for ill. But is it what it should be? More significantly, even if it were determined entirely by American conservatives — even if they were the only people existing in the country — would it be as it should?

Consider here what our current culture is compared to that of the '50s: Virtually everyone back then was what we'd now call a "conservative," of one stripe or another. Why, people will sometimes point out that in his speeches, Democratic President John F. Kennedy sounded more like Ronald Reagan than like his brother Teddy during the latter's 1980 White House run. But two examples perhaps perfectly epitomize our cultural change. First, on YouTube you can find an old public service announcement, produced in 1961, titled "Boys Beware!" It unabashedly warns teen lads of, and portrays examples of, homosexual predation and grooming, calling same-sex attraction a "sickness" as dangerous as smallpox. The kicker: It was produced with the cooperation of the police and school district in Inglewood, California. Now, just this year, 2024, Inglewood hosted its "First Annual Pride Festival" — also with the government's cooperation. The only thing shocking about it, too, is that it took the city so long. Also to the point here, many if not most of today's conservatives would join in disavowing the '61 video, perhaps calling it "over the top" or even "intolerant."

As for the second example, '50s Americans were so vigilantly anti-communist that we had at the time the House Committee on Un-American Activities, which among other things sought to root out communist subversion in government. Today's times have seen communists/communist sympathizers *in* government; Anita Dunn, the Barack Obama administration communications director who called Mao Zedong one of her two "favorite political philosophers," is a case in point.

Now, though, let's get to the point. Even if enough Americans have recently been "red-pilled" so that we have actually "moved right" as a society (for now) relative to seven years ago, how significant is this? It's a bit as with health. Research informs that American men's testosterone levels have dropped 30 percent over the last three decades (perhaps this explains much!) and that the populace is notably fatter than in 1960. Given this, a guy whose testosterone level is only 15 percent lower and who has two fewer rolls around his waist than average may say, "I'm doing great!" But is he? Should he use as a yardstick today's average fitness level — or even that of 1960? Likewise, while knowing where we've been cultur-

ally and where we are can tell us where we're going (projecting the lines), where *should* we be? As with fitness, is a '50s measure the gold standard? That's all relative, and "better than this, that, or someone" doesn't necessarily mean "ideal" or even "good." So the point isn't to aim culturally for our time's best Overton window, though *politically*, this is sometimes necessary. The point also isn't to merely resurrect the nostalgia-inducing norms of another time. The point is to cultivate the timeless.

While this is much easier said than done, it must first be said, and *can* be said with specificity because the objective not only exists, but has been defined for us by our ancestors. That is, we have a yardstick for determining national goodness, and I often put it this way: If morality came in a jar, what would be on the ingredients label? The *virtues* would be. They are, to present a list that's mostly a combination of the theological, cardinal, and heavenly virtues, Faith, Hope, Honesty, Charity, Fortitude (Courage), Justice, Temperance, Prudence, Chastity, Diligence, Patience, Love, Kindness, Forgiveness, and Humility. Let's now go through each one and evaluate, sometimes briefly, how today's America measures up.

Faith

Unlike the saying "Might makes right," faith breeds a right that makes might. That is, when you know not just that you're on the right side of history (which, really, is too often just the right side of current events), but that what you embrace is objectively, eternally, universally right, it emboldens you. The bravest culture warriors don't risk martyrdom for a flavor of the day, but for the ultimate fact for all days. Authentic faith also informs that there is such a reality, that, no, everything is not relative, because Truth is real and eternal. This orders one's thinking in the same way that knowing the laws (truths) of nutrition, and that not everything is governed by taste, orders one's diet.

Now, though, spiritual junk food is the order of the day. Christian faith has declined like testosterone levels, with Pew Research Center informing that only 65 percent of adults in 2018-19 described themselves as Christian, a figure down 12 points in just a decade. In fact, "nones" (as opposed to nuns) — people who describe their religion as "nothing in particular" and are generally apathetic and sometimes even hostile toward faith — are now the largest religion-related cohort in the United States (28 percent of the population), according to 2024 Pew research. What's more, today, America's pagans outnumber her Presbyterians.

Does this matter? Our second president, John Adams, said it certainly does. "Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people," he warned in 1798, expressing a sentiment common among great thinkers. "It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other." We now have one (or many?) of "any other," which is why we today epitomize an observation made by Belgian playwright Émile Cammaerts. To paraphrase, it goes, "When people cease believing in God, it's not that they then believe in nothing. It's that they'll believe in anything."

Cultural sea change: The public service announcement "Boys Beware," which warned of homosexual predators, was created in 1961 with government cooperation. Today, if you spoke of it at all approvingly in the mainstream media, you'd surely be "canceled."

Hope

A 2022 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report found that 44 percent of American teens experience "persistent feelings of sadness and hopelessness." Is this surprising? They're initiated into soul-darkening sin while young, and are bombarded with doom-and-gloom, Chicken Little warnings about a climate-change-induced end of days. Add to this that it is the young people who are most rapidly abandoning faith, and it makes sense. What's the message, after all: Eat, drink, and be merry, you soulless organic robot, for tomorrow you disappear into oblivion?

Honesty

"Honesty is such a lonely word," laments a famous 1978 Billy Joel song. Bearing false witness is nothing new, which is why it's proscribed in a divine Commandment. Yet today's America is increasingly descending into Soviet Union-level dishonesty. Just recently, in fact, the Democrats and mainstream media claimed that President Trump called for ex-Congresswoman Liz Cheney's assassination; in reality, he'd merely demanded that she herself fight in the wars she would send other people's children to die in. This wasn't misinterpretation but gross prevarication — and evil.

Charity

Americans have long been the world's most charitable people. The bad news is that, as during recent Hurricane Helene, government increasingly tries to supplant charity with government action (and often

inaction). This is tragic because, as I wrote in "Charity Disparity: The Virtue That Can Only Be Practiced Privately" (*The New American*, 11/11/2024), "Charity doesn't just feed a man, but feeds the souls of recipient and giver; it doesn't just clothe a child, but clothes him and his helper in fellowship; it doesn't just quench a woman's thirst, but quenches that deep desire to show and receive love; it doesn't just connect the needy with life-giving aid, but connects beneficiary and benefactor, more closely, to the spirit of God."

Fortitude (Courage)

While many intrepid souls do still reside among us, too many Americans are capons or frightened hens — who encourage their own deficiency in children. Thus do we have "safe spaces" with stuffed animals on college campuses, and "trigger warnings." Thus did we treat a glorified flu as if it were the Black Plague. And thus did we recently see snowflakes melting down on social media, wondering how they "can go on" with their lives, because their preferred presidential candidate lost. Coming to mind here, too, could be author G. Michael Hopf's recently famous quotation, "Tough times create strong men. Strong men create easy times. Easy times create weak men. Weak men create tough times."

Justice

Weak men also enable injustice. And what is witnessed today? The term "justice" is now, sadly, perhaps most associated with "social justice," which has a quite contrary effect. And with our two-tiered "justice" system — one standard for the pseudo-elite, another for the street; one for the regime's enablers, another for dissenters — justice is as lonely a word as honesty (not surprisingly, as the latter is a prerequisite for the former). Our injustice is so egregious, in fact, that there's a newly popular term for it: lawfare.

Temperance

This virtue relates to control over excess, and some today do prioritize modesty in food and drink. It's not just, however, that we're not more obese than ever for nothin'. Rather, in matters far more important, we need a good dose of temperance. Just consider outlandish behavior's ubiquity. Professor Thomas Sowell once implicated late boxer Muhammad Ali, who was inspired in his brash showmanship by "heel" professional wrestler "Gorgeous George," in the normalization of sporting-arena trash talk. But today being a flamboyant heel, in athletics and beyond, is common. Put on a dress (as a man), curse people out, be sexually explicit or otherwise shocking, and you can become a social-media sensation. A sense of propriety is now sorely lacking — and intemperate behavior is rewarded. Oh, and part of this, too, is the complete mainstreaming of vulgarity and sartorial immodesty.

Prudence

Years ago, while offering a left-handed defense of the then-assailed, pre-fall-from-grace Boy Scouts (i.e., when they still knew what a boy was), comedian-cum-commentator Bill Maher said that the "nerds need some place to go." This profound lack of wisdom, lack of a sense of what is good, reminds me of the famous line by C.S. Lewis, "We laugh at honour and are shocked to find traitors in our midst." Yet Maher merely reflects this time, in which, owing to imprudence, good is called bad and bad, good.

Chastity

Speaking of which, a woman close to me once said, "Years ago, you knew who the bad girls were; now you know who the good girls are." In the grip of our Great Sexual Heresy, sexual content, sexual innuendo, and depravity are everywhere. Why, Democratic presidential nominee Kamala Harris even featured at an early November campaign rally a performance by Cardi B, an entertainer (in)famous for singing the song WAP (which, incredibly, stands for Wet A** P***y). This is how low we've sunk.

Moreover, with millions of people, women particularly, having voted in the election based on the so-called right to kill an unborn baby, something must be explicitly said: Prenatal infanticide will never be sufficiently frowned upon by the larger society until our Great Sexual Heresy is put to bed and chastity is restored as a civilizational norm. Why? As philosopher G.K. Chesterton put it, "Men do not differ much on what things they call evils; they differ greatly on what evils they will call excusable." It's plain when you speak to even people who'd be inclined to oppose abortion *generally* — staunch conservatives — that they may cede that prenatal infanticide is "not good" (they're disinclined to use a strong term such as "evil"), but they nonetheless find it excusable. This is because the vast majority of Americans, even many "Christians," have an emotional

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Empty pews: In early America, church attendance was robust. Today, the churches are often almost empty, but the nightclubs are full. The percentage of Americans identifying as "Christian" has dropped more than 10 points per decade in recent times.

vested interest in keeping it legal. They accept at least first-stage sexual-devolution norms: fornication, cohabitation, and, let's say, great "latitude" in heterosexuality's practice. (This, not to mention that many are supportive of homosexuality and other sexual aberrations.) Were sexuality still restricted via strong social codes to authentic marriage, out-of-wedlock pregnancy would be rare (it was four percent in the 1940s) and, hence, the emotional vested interest in escaping its consequences would be rare. Because the demon of desire has been loosed of its fetters, however, and libertinism reigns, the escape hatch of abortion is demanded. Under representative government, you cannot legislate against what a majority's *powerful* passions lobby for — as illustrated by the majorities that voted on November 5 for pro-abortion ballot measures. Moreover, while former UN Ambassador Alan Keyes correctly called prenatal infanticide "the slavery issue of our time," it is profoundly different in a most significant way: Slaves were visible, walked among us, and could complain about their plight. Yet as the title of a famous 1984 pro-life film informs, the unborn baby's instinctive complaint is a "silent scream." It is, too, as with that proverbial question, "If a tree falls in a forest and no one hears it, does it make a sound?" Of course it does; sound waves are emitted. But no one pays it any mind; no one even flinches. Likewise, the baby's silent scream is unheard and unheeded; neither police nor ambulance ever comes. It's out of sight, out of mind — and, most significantly, out of heart.

AP Images

Prophetic: Approximately a century ago, British philosopher G.K. Chesterton said a time would come when smoking a cigar would be considered more offensive than abortion. And today? His Britain is working toward total tobacco prohibition — while allowing the aborting of even a six-month-old baby.

Diligence

Entities such as the Pacific Educational Group make millions devising school curricula "informing" that hard work, planning for the future, and punctuality are "white norms." There's also the ascendancy of "anti-work ideology" online among some younger-generation individuals who clearly don't embody William Bennett's saying, "There are no menial jobs, only menial attitudes." These phenomena and many others today reflect a profound lack of diligence.

Patience

A want of this virtue, along with a spirit of entitlement, helps explain the aforementioned young people, many of whom believe they should earn $300,000 right out of college. Of course, when modern parents pander to children's desire for immediate gratification, patience may not develop.

Love, Kindness, and Forgiveness

Love is the greatest virtue, and kindness and forgiveness flow from it. In fact, in what He said was the most important Commandment, Jesus instructed that you must "*love* the Lord your God" and "*love* your neighbor as yourself." Of course, no one disputes love's importance; the disagreement arises over what *constitutes* true love (and kindness). For example, echoing the pagan Romans, who called Christians "haters of humanity," many today label those who won't facilitate the MUSS agenda "haters." Thus, for Love to actually be more than a mere pretense, it must be informed by other virtues, such as Faith, Honesty (the intellectual variety), Justice, Temperance, Prudence, Chastity, and Humility. Detached from Truth, efforts at love are often just self-delusion.

As for forgiveness, we must remember that it doesn't obviate worldly consequences. Were it otherwise, we'd face the dilemma of punishing an unruly child *or* forgiving him. Administering punishment, however, can be the loving course.

Humility

Humility may rank only below Love in importance because it forestalls pride, known as the "father of all sin." It's thus labeled because the prideful person will often be unwilling to see flaws in himself — or his own sins — and, therefore, can't self-correct.

Tragically, though, pride is exalted in our time, masquerading, quite devilishly, as "self-esteem." This, which began to be pushed in schools decades ago, was originally justified (at least in part) with the idea that girls' academic performance allegedly declined during adolescence due to declining self-esteem. Sure enough, too, girls scored worse than boys did on the "self-esteem tests" social engineers designed. But forget about causation; even their correlation didn't truly exist. After all, while black teen boys performed the worst academically, they also scored highest of all on the self-esteem tests. But, hey, why let facts scuttle a fancy new theory?

Restoring the Culture

Much more could be said about our civilization's decline vis-à-vis the virtues; the above are just examples. However, the most important point is not how we measure up to them, but that we must again start measuring ourselves with them. To draw an analogy, if you aim to become proficient at tennis or make your child so,

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Cultural craziness: When a youth says he wants to be the opposite sex (an impossibility), we hear that "you should be able to be yourself." Woe betide, however, the youth who identifies as MAGA. For then he can be called "racist" and "fascist," and be bullied into submission.

you learn the game's principles and then, respectively, cultivate or inculcate them. Likewise, the virtues could be said to be the *principles of morality*. And, obviously, the remedy for our moral decay — for demoralization — is moralization. This is effected via application of the virtues.

This also matters because, while it's fine exposing what ails us, determining the prescription for the cure is imperative. Regarding this, we should heed the words of famed late architect Buckminster Fuller. "You never change things by fighting the existing reality," he said. "To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete."

As to our existing model, moderns believe in "shallow things, shallowly," to quote commentator Bret Stephens. The West currently exalts ideas such as tolerance, equality, environmentalism, progress, pleasure-seeking, and open-mindedness. *All* these priorities are widely misunderstood, are actuated incorrectly, and have to a degree become destructive — and none are virtues. They also are accepted axiomatically. But how can we know when our tolerance enables turpitude, that emphasizing equality yields laxity, when our environmentalism becomes paganism, when progress is progression toward error, when our pleasure may invite perdition, and when our minds are so open that our brains have fallen out? By applying the virtues. And how can we break the instinctive attachment to the aforementioned faux virtues, such as equality? Again, by applying the real ones.

There is, however, a prerequisite for this: believing in Truth. It's no wonder we ignore the virtues yet talk much about "values"; the latter is part of the lexicon of atheism. Values are variable and thus can be vagaries or even vices; they're simply things people happen to value. Virtues reflect Truth, which transcends man and is objective by definition. Ah, but there's the sticking point. How many today even believe in Truth? I've often cited 2002 Barna Group research showing that most Americans *don't*; they fancy morality "relative" and are likely to make decisions based on what feels right. But this way lies madness. Real things aren't relative — they're *real*. Boiled down, saying "morality is relative" is to say it doesn't actually exist; only human preference does. And what this is reflective of was well expressed by a 1977 *New Yorker* magazine cover. It featured the Devil addressing a large group of arrivals in Hell and saying, reassuringly, "You'll find there's no right or wrong here. Just what works for you." Anyone who'd restore the culture must start by restoring belief in Truth — first in himself, if necessary.

Then there is one more matter. How can we encourage, or dare I say enforce, virtue's embrace? Well, this brings us back to those votes still to be cast. Question: What is political correctness, or the intensification of it called "wokeness"? And how is it so effectively imposed?

Wokeness amounts to a set of social codes that are enforced the way social codes have always been — via social pressure — with the social-pressure regime being called in this case "cancel culture." But all groups, from the ancient Greeks to the Amish to the Victorians to the wokesters, have effectively used social pressure to control behavior. All groups, that is, except conservatives.

Explaining this phenomenon well was Chesterton. As he wrote in his 1908 book *Orthodoxy*:

> All conservatism is based upon the idea that if you leave things alone you leave them as they are. But you do not. If you leave a thing alone you leave it to a torrent of change. If you leave a white post alone it will soon be a black post. If you particularly want it to be white you must be always painting it again; that is, you must be always having a revolution.

And for this we must be revolutionary — as the Founding Fathers were.

So what of the votes? If conservatives had refused to cast ballots in our election, the cultural devolutionaries would've won and would be devising our governmental laws. Is it any different if we recede from the cultural sphere, refusing to "vote" on our social laws, and leave that field to the devolutionaries?

Triumphing politically over the long term requires that we win the culture, and to win the culture we must first show up for the battle. Regarding good and evil we must, respectively, prioritize, emphasize, legitimize — and stigmatize. We must cancel the cancel cultists.

"Live and let live" applies only to tastes, never to Truth. And forget not that immutable law of human civilization: If you don't control the culture, the culture will control you. ■

EARLY VOTING RESHAPES ELECTIONS FOR REPUBLICANS

Donald Trump and the Republican Party secured a landslide victory in 2024 by embracing early voting and increasing voter registration and grassroots efforts in battleground states.

AP Images

by D. Michael DeRidder

After being voted out of office four years earlier (at least officially), Donald Trump was elected the 47th president of the United States on November 5 in what was perhaps the biggest political comeback in U.S. history. Trump's election landslide was announced several hours after polls closed. He took the Electoral College with 312 electoral votes. He also won the popular vote, with The Associated Press reporting that he received 50.0 percent (76,688,639 votes) to Kamala Harris' 48.3 percent (74,117,248 votes).

Democrats and the "Red Mirage" Narrative

The 2024 presidential election results differed from those of the 2020 presidential election in a few key areas. For one, Vice President Kamala Harris received nearly 10 million fewer votes than Joe Biden received in 2020, when multiple states took several days to finish counting votes. The delay in counting votes led to a so-called red mirage, in which Trump appeared to be ahead on election night, only to see Biden eventually declared the winner four days later. The Associated Press reported Biden's victory on the Saturday after the election.

In 2024, Democrats suggested that it would once again take several days to count the ballots, implying that Americans should be prepared for another "red mirage." Former President Barack Obama expressed this sentiment in an Election Day post on X: "It took several days to count every ballot in 2020, and it's very likely we won't know the outcome tonight either. So please keep a few things in mind as you make your voice heard today: — Thousands of election workers around the country are working hard today. Respect them. Thank them. — Don't share things before checking your sources. — Let the process run its course. It takes time to count every ballot."

Leftist media bias in polling during this election season was also glaringly obvious, with several blatantly inaccurate poll predictions. The Seltzer poll published by the *Des Moines Register* inaccurately showed Harris leading Trump by three percent in Iowa. Another inaccurate election forecaster, Allan Lichtman, who co-developed the "Keys to the White House" prediction system, failed miserably in his 2024 presidential election analysis. After the election, Lichtman acknowledged his "13 keys" were wrong, stating in a post on X, "Unlike Nate Silver, who will try to squirm out of why he didn't see the election coming, I admit that I was wrong."

New GOP Strategy

Trump's overwhelming victory prevented the days or weeks of protracted vote-counting that plagued the 2020 presidential election. One of the main reasons for this is that the Republican Party adopted a new strategy this election cycle in an attempt to beat the Democratic Party at its own game: They focused on registering voters in battleground states, and encouraged early voting. Traditionally, Republicans have been reluctant to vote early, preferring to cast their ballots on Election Day. However, that changed under the direction of Trump's campaign and GOP leaders.

Although Democrats started the early-vote "firewall" strategy, Republican strategists reshaped their approach to how Republican candidates campaign, successfully changing the prevailing consensus on early voting. *The New American* interviewed Wisconsin GOP Chairman Brian Schimming regarding the early-voting campaign, and the voter response to the new strategy. Schimming said sentiment among voters

D. Michael DeRidder is a staff writer for The New American.

changed in response to the early-voting messaging before the election:

> So, we were the first state party in the country to adopt an early-vote campaign. And, I said to people, we've crossed the bridge. People want to vote early. They do it for various reasons, but people want to vote early.
>
> And I think Republicans have crossed the bridge on that issue as well. And when I explain to partisan groups, I say, look, we can't keep going into Election Day, 100,000 votes down. They expect to make it up, you know, on Election Day. But the other thing, it's a resource issue. So if I get a Republican to vote two weeks early, I don't have to spend resources, volunteers, mail, phones, all the things that drive people crazy.
>
> We don't have to do that anymore. We can go spend it on somebody who might be persuadable, maybe an independent voter. So the real reason is to get the votes in the bank as soon as we can. But also it helps for campaign resources.

When asked about voters who are reluctant to participate in early voting, Schimming said Republican leaders have led by example, persuading many voters to request early ballots, but also said those who prefer voting in person should do so if they know they will cast their vote on election day:

> [U.S. Senator] Ron Johnson, all the Republicans in the delegation are all voting early, are all doing videos of them voting early to try to send the message to Republicans that, you just can't keep doing it the old way. I mean, if people want to vote on Election Day and they know they'll make it on Election Day, I'm fine with that, I really am. But, we encourage people to get the votes early, because we want to build that lead.

When asked about election-integrity concerns in Wisconsin, Schimming said Republicans were prepared with poll workers, poll watchers, and hundreds of attorneys.

Key Battleground Win

The change in voter registration and early voting strategy helped lead Trump to victory in Pennsylvania, one of the most crucial battleground states. Trump's win in that state can primarily be credited to Scott Presler and the Early Vote Action PAC he created in January 2023.

According to the Early Vote Action website, the purpose of the organization is to "register Republican voters and get them committed to vote early, absentee, by mail, or on Election Day ... in the key swing states of Arizona, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin."

Shortly after the results came in on election night in Pennsylvania, it was obvious that Presler's voter-registration and early-voting work was successful in securing a Trump victory. Presler congratulated Trump, stating in a post on X, "Mister President, I'm pleased to share that we have delivered Pennsylvania for you. Congratulations, sir. @realDonaldTrump."

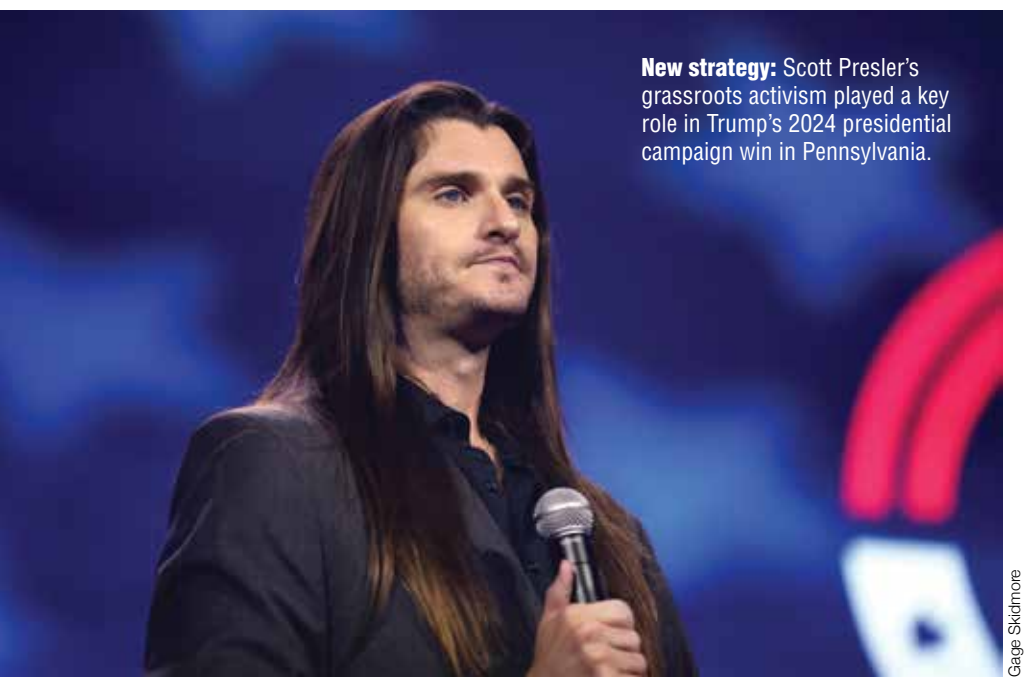
Many notable individuals expressed their gratitude for Presler's contributions, with Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. acknowledging his efforts: "Thank you, Scott. You were a miracle worker." Former Trump National Security Advisor General Michael Flynn noted the impact of Early Vote Action on the election, and credited Presler's leadership for the success of the grassroots movement in Pennsylvania. Flynn posted on X: "I want to give a GIANT SHOUTOUT to @ScottPresler.… Talk about persistence. Thank you Scott for all your amazing grassroots work registering people, getting out the vote. I know it was a team effort, but it required leadership and you were that leader!"

Presler plans to continue his efforts after the 2024 presidential election, and remains committed to maintaining grassroots efforts to reshape Republican campaigning in Pennsylvania prior to the 2026 midterm and 2028 presidential elections. He stated on X, "Our next goal is to Florida Pennsylvania. Let's keep registering new Republican voters."

Following the election, Presler told conservative political commentator Benny Johnson that voters want to see Republican lawmakers respond to the mandate given to them by delivering results, and urge Republicans to prioritize advancing new legislation.

The Republican Party under Trump's leadership has once again become competitive — motivating volunteers and mobilizing voters.

But this is not an argument for trying to secure early voting. Indeed, early voting has increased the opportunities for fraud and the best solution is to go back to same day voting — a return to Election *Day*, not election week or month. Our real focus should be on true election integrity and reforms. ■



New strategy: Scott Presler's grassroots activism played a key role in Trump's 2024 presidential campaign win in Pennsylvania.

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POPE FRANCIS' SUBVERSIVE SYNOD ON SYNODALITY

Just as a government can be subverted and altered through infiltration and control, so can religion. Case in point: the subversive work of the Synod on Synodality.

by William F. Jasper

AP Images

"A hostile takeover of the Church of Jesus Christ." That was how Cardinal Gerhard Ludwig Müller of Germany described the Synod on Synodality, the ongoing experiment in church chaos unleashed in 2022 by Pope Francis (Jorge Mario Bergoglio). That's a serious charge from a high-level prelate and theologian who has served as prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. The late Cardinal George Pell of Australia dittoed that evaluation, referring to the Synod as "a toxic nightmare" and as "this potpourri, this outpouring of New Age goodwill." The second and final formal session of this ecclesial "nightmare" concluded at the end of October.

What now? How will this Synod impact the Catholic Church and the world? Well, according to the "progressives" in the Catholic clergy and the worldly media, it represents a seismic "paradigm shift" in Catholic teaching and will usher in a glorious new age for humanity. Catholic prelates and lay faithful of the traditional, orthodox persuasion do not dispute that the Synod signals a seismic shift in 2,000 years of Catholic teaching on doctrine and morals. However, they charge that this tectonic move amounts to papal endorsement for a destructive tsunami that includes open borders, LGBTQ "rights" (including "gay" marriage), married priests (and priestesses), abolition of the death penalty, easier annulment/divorce, de-emphasis of opposition to abortion and euthanasia, worshiping creation rather than the Creator, global government under the anti-Christian United Nations, a Marxian socio-political-economic ideology, accommodation with communist regimes, and more.

William F. Jasper is a senior editor of The New American.

"Renewal" or Revolution?

According to Bishop Athanasius Schneider of Kazakhstan, "The so-called 'synodal path' is ultimately an attempt to give official approval to truly heretical doctrines." Schneider, who grew up under communist persecution in the Soviet Union, says the aims of a synod should be to "clarify doctrine without any ambiguity, without any doubt" and to "reject the errors of the time." But those in charge of this Synod, he asserts, are allowing (and helping) "poison, spiritual poisons" to spread.

Cardinal Joseph Zen, the heroic 92-year-old bishop emeritus of Hong Kong who has suffered arrest and persecution under the Communist Chinese regime that Francis now warmly embraces, has repeatedly warned of the subversion taking place under the Synod's false rubric of "renewal." In a letter sent last year to all the cardinals and bishops participating in the Synod, Zen took particular aim at the extremely radical "synodal path" of the dissident German bishops, whom Pope Francis accorded an outsized role at the Synod. Cardinal Zen's letter notes that the German clerics "propose a revolutionary change in the constitution of the Church and in the moral teaching about sexuality." "More than a hundred Cardinals and Bishops from all over the world have written a

letter of admonishment to the German bishops," he writes, "but the latter have not acknowledged their error." More importantly, the Hong Kong cardinal observes, "The Pope has never ordered this process of the Church in Germany to stop." This is in marked contrast to Francis' harsh treatment and removal of conservative bishops Joseph Strickland (Tyler, Texas), Daniel Fernández Torres (Puerto Rico), and José Luis Azcona (Brazil), and his ongoing jihad against traditional Catholics, whom he repeatedly disparages as too "rigid."

The ecclesial assembly is being presented as a "movement of the Holy Spirit" among "the People of God," but critics see it as a sham that is being orchestrated and influenced by unholy spirits. The Synod was launched in 2022, with its first month-long formal session taking place in Rome in October 2023. That session validated suspicions that the assembly would turn into an omnium-gatherum of the heretical and heterodox. Of particular concern (both then and now) was the push by "progressive" forces to get the Church to join the LGBTQ+++ parade, an effort that has already made great progress under Francis.

Another "hot button" issue is the ordination of women. The Catholic Church has consistently taught, and recent popes (John Paul II and Benedict XVI) have unequivocally confirmed, that the sacerdotal office instituted by Jesus Christ can be filled by males only. Female deacons and priests are not an option. It has been *definitively settled*. Or has it? Francis swings both ways on this issue. In his interview with CBS News anchor Norah O'Donnell earlier this year, he answered with a succinct "No" when asked if the sacrament of Holy Orders would ever be open to women. Pretty definitive, yes? Well, hold on. As with so many other sensitive matters on which he flip-flops (and then flop-flips), Francis conspicuously has sent the opposite signal by setting up two commissions to "study" women's ordination and by inviting some of the Church's most outspoken feminist activists to participate in them. Moreover, he took the unprecedented action of not only appointing women to participate in the Synod, but also awarding them voting status on par with bishops.

AP Images

What's changed? The Catholic Church has moved to the left over many years, even though it may still seem to champion the faith of millennia to many casual observers.

The Welcoming "Church of Accompaniment"

Like his seeming fetish with LGBTQ issues, Bergoglio appears to be obsessed with a brand of "welcoming" ecumenism that insists on fabricating a world religion that would meld Catholicism not only with other Christian denominations, but also with pagan cults, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and every other religious belief system. Just prior to the opening of this month's "synodality session," the pope dropped a heresy bomb in Singapore. During a meeting with a group of young people in that multi-faith country, the pope casually said that "All religions are a path to God." He didn't stop there. The Kumbaya moment (which was videotaped and broadcast to the world) continued with his banal and true assertion that "God is for everyone, and therefore, we are all God's children." But he went on: "There is only one God, and we, our religions, are languages, paths to God. Some are Sikhs, some Muslims, some Hindus, some Christians, but they are different paths." And are other "languages" such as Voodoo, Santeria, Wicca, luciferianism, and satanism also paths to God? If not, why not?

The aforementioned Bishop Schneider of Kazakhstan calmly and charitably reproved and corrected Francis in an interview with Raymond Arroyo on EWTN. Responding to the pope's shocking statement, Schneider told Arroyo, "Such an affirmation of Pope Francis is clearly against the divine revelation, it contradicts directly the first Commandment of God which is ever valid — 'You shall not have other gods beside me' — this is so clear, and such a statement contradicts the entire Gospel." Moreover, Schneider reminded EWTN viewers that "Jesus Christ said, 'No one comes to the Father except through me.'"

LGBTQ "Radical Inclusion" Imperative

On December 18, 2023, the Vatican's Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith (DDF, formerly the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith) released the now-infamous document *Fiducia Supplicans* ("Supplicating Trust") calling on Catholic priests to bless "same-sex couples" and heterosexual couples living in polygamous and adulterous relationships. This came only weeks fol-

lowing the first session of the Synod on Synodality and one week before Christmas. Could the timing have been more diabolical than to drop this heretical and blasphemous bomb as Christians were preparing to celebrate the birth of the Savior Jesus Christ? The outraged response from Catholic clergy and lay faithful worldwide was immediate and volcanic.

The author of the offending decree, Cardinal Víctor Manuel "Tucho" Fernández, is a protege of Francis from Argentina and, like Francis, is a liberal-left Jesuit. As *The New American* has previously reported, he also has a somewhat checkered past, including authorship of two sexually explicit books. Nevertheless, Francis decided that Fernández was just the guy needed to head the Church's doctrinal office, the aforementioned DDF. As such, Cardinal Fernández has helped guide the new "synodal path." He undoubtedly played a key role in formulating the *Instrumentum Laboris* (Working Document) of the 2023 session that called for "radical inclusion" of those people "on the margins," especially "LGBTQ+ people."

Pope Francis' support for the radical LGBTQ agenda, always camouflaged under the banners of compassion, charity, and mercy, came out into the open during the Synod. It was evident from the start that Francis had stacked the deck with the most vocal advocates of the Church's pro-sodomite lobby.

In a pastoral rebuke issued on October 17, 2024, Cardinal Zen called out the leaders of the synodal circus. "From the beginning of this synod," he wrote, "the two cardinals leading the assembly and the Pope's appointed head of the doctrinal office did not emphasize preserving the faith, but emphasized making changes: changes to, in particular, the operational structure of the Church and its ethical teachings; and the ethical justification of 'sex,' especially regarding homosexual relationships."

"Grave Depravity"

Specifically, Cardinal Zen is referring to Pope Francis' top Synodal appointees: Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich, S.J., relator-general (the top dog) of the Synod; Cardinal Mario Grech, secretary-general of the Synod; and Cardinal Víctor Manuel Fernández, prefect of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Pope Francis, Cardinal Fernández, and the rest of the perversion posse are bucking two millennia of consistent Church teaching. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (2357) notes that Sacred Scripture "presents homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity" and that Church tradition "has always declared that 'homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered.'" Moreover, it says, "They are contrary to the natural law."

Note that the teaching is that homosexual "acts" are condemned as sin. A person with a homosexual inclination or attraction can live a Christian life if he abstains from his "intrinsically disordered" lusts. The sodomite lobby, however, cannot abide any restriction on their libidinal impulses. They demand that the Church change, that Christianity change, to accommodate their depravity.

Shepherds or Wolves?

The Church has always taught that to "admonish the sinner" is a spiritual work of mercy and an act of charity. If done in a spirit of meekness and love for the other, it is not an act of sanctimony or self-righteousness. We are to hate the sin, yet love the sinner. Jesus Christ teaches this in the Gospel according to St. Matthew (18:15-20), and St. Paul does likewise in his Epistle to the Galatians (6:1). In the Gospel according to St. John (chapters 5 & 8), Jesus tells sinners to "Go and sin no more." In the Gospel according to St. Mark (1:15), Jesus says "Repent and believe the good news!"

Repent? Why? Because He loves them and wants to save their souls. He wants to save them from wallowing in their sins. He offers mercy to all who will repent and believe. This is basic Christianity.

We see the same message of mercy and justice in the Old Testament, where the prophet Ezekiel (3:18-19) delivers this stark warning from God: "When I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' and you give him not warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way to save his life, the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at your hand. Yet if you warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity, but you have delivered your soul."

The prophet reiterates this Divine pronouncement in even greater detail in Chapter 33. Such a harsh judgment, one would hope and pray, would be sufficient to shake unfaithful shepherds — priests, bishops, cardinals, and, yes, Pope Francis — from their calamitous course that is encouraging millions of souls to die in iniquity and leaving oceans of blood that will be required at the shepherds' hands. ■

All religions are a path to God....
God is for everyone, and therefore, we are all God's children.... There is only one God, and we, our religions, are languages, paths to God. Some are Sikhs, some Muslims, some Hindus, some Christians, but they are different paths.

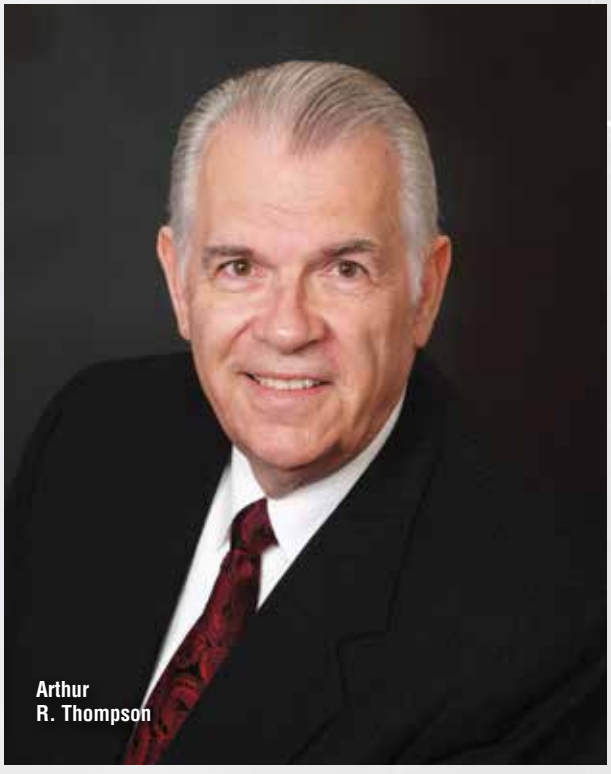
POPE FRANCIS
September 2024

Wikipedia/Casa Rosada

Remembering Patriot & Leader Arthur R. Thompson

by Christian Gomez

The John Birch Society, the parent organization of this magazine, mourns the passing of its former CEO Arthur Robert Thompson, known affectionately as "Art." A patriot, devout Christian, and one of the organization's most influential leaders, Art went home to the Lord on November 7, 2024, after dedicating decades of his life to the cause of individual liberty and exposing efforts to undermine individual freedoms in pursuit of a godless and socialist one-world government.



Arthur R. Thompson

Born on October 11, 1938, in Seattle to Arthur Latimer and Edith W. (née Cole) Thompson, Art's upbringing was steeped in family values and hard work. His grandfather's adventurous beginnings as a stagecoach driver between Missoula and Ronan, Montana, undoubtedly influenced Art's tenacity and drive. As a young boy, he had a mischievous streak, and fondly recalled "French leaves" — playful, unannounced departures — lighthearted memories of his adventurous spirit.

His early years were marked by academic and professional pursuits, including attending the University of Washington and officer training at the Washington Military Academy at Camp Murray. He later worked as a facilities manager at Boeing in Seattle, where his observations of Cold War-era Soviet aircraft orders fueled his anti-communist resolve. While working there, he recalled, the company received an order from the Soviet Union for aircraft with loading-bay doors that opened on the bottom of the aircraft — similar to bomb-bay doors.

Art was very active in anti-communist activity as a young man. In his 20s, using various pseudonyms, he infiltrated several communist organizations in the Seattle area and shared his findings with the Seattle Police Intelligence Squad. At a communist-sponsored venue in which future Democratic Congressman John Lewis spoke, Art recalled identifying every single person in attendance as a Communist Party member, except for the speaker. Lewis may or may not have been a party member in those days, but he certainly shared the crowd's Marxist-Leninist ideology. At another undercover operation collecting signatures to put the Communist Party USA on the ballot in Washington state, he was recognized and forced to make a quick exit. This anti-communist work was the beginning of his lifelong mission to combat ideological threats to freedom.

A Lifelong Dedication to The John Birch Society

Art first became aware of The John Birch Society (JBS) in the early 1960s, mainly due to media smears falsely labeling the organization as "racist." His experience and study of communism over the years convinced him that everything the Society said about the subject was true, but the media charges of racism concerned him. Determined to uncover the truth, Art joined JBS on May 1, 1964. He quickly recognized the inaccuracies in these claims. "Once I join the Society, I'll see about all that," Art recalled thinking, "and then I realized immediately the racist charge was baloney and it pleased me very much." By 1965, he was a life member and a

Christian Gomez is research project manager for The John Birch Society.

chapter leader, beginning a journey of extraordinary leadership.

In Renton, Washington, Art built a network of multiple active chapters, gaining a reputation as an exceptional organizer and recruiter. As a result, he became a section leader. His leadership was marked by making personal connections, community involvement, and education. Whether by hosting events in his home on a Saturday evening or leading Support Your Local Police ad-hoc committees, Art inspired countless individuals to volunteer and eventually join the Society. According to a letter written by a close friend, who knew him at the time, "With Art's leadership, the John Birch Society in the Renton area was very active and a driving force in local politics." During a phone interview earlier this year, when asked how he achieved such success, Art replied:

> Basically, by working our neighborhood and seeking out like-minded individuals and then inviting them to films and speakers [events] in my home. But also, being involved actively in local politics. I was also involved in the Republican Party. I've always been involved in local politics and local community service my whole life. I didn't just sit there and say "I'm a Bircher, now what am I going to do?"

Driven to build the organization, Art actively recruited others to work with him and get the job done. "You got to understand that I was working with a bunch of other people. I may have given it some leadership. That's true. But, you know, we saw enough people who were willing … to do things and help grow the Society," he explained. Through those efforts, they "recruited local speakers who knew their subject as it pertained to the agenda of The John Birch Society."

Art's leadership extended to the national stage. By the time he was asked to come on the staff of The John Birch Society, he had five chapters in his section, and none of the chapter leaders lived more than a mile and half from his house. He began his career in the Society as a field coordinator out of Spokane, Washington, and became area coordinator in the 1970s.

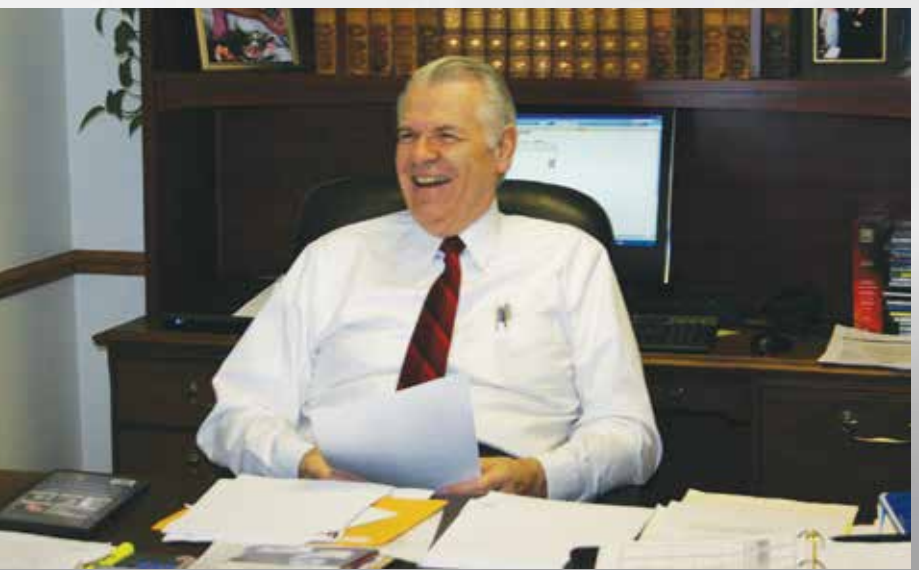
Asked what advice he would give to a new JBS field coordinator, he answered, "Find leadership and put them to work. Build organization. Organization is what it's all about…. It's building the chapters and getting them working on the [JBS] agenda and doing it face-to-face." Patience and persistence were key to his success. Art went from holding Saturday evening JBS events at his house to which nobody showed up, to holding events and not being able fit another person inside. "It takes time, but once it starts to roll and take inertia of itself then things really start to happen."

He put people to work on MOTOREDE, the Movement to Restore Decency, to get sex education out of the public schools; Support Your Local Police committees; putting up huge roadside billboards to *Get US Out!* of the United Nations; and impeaching Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren. Art emphasized the continued visibility of such activities: "You got to be visible and let people see The John Birch Society at work."

In 1981, Art left the JBS staff to return to private business. He returned to JBS in 1995 and rose through the ranks, eventually serving as a field coordinator, regional director of field activities, and national director of development. In October 2005, the Board of Directors elected him to be CEO, bringing much-needed stability to the Society and expanding its reach. He served as CEO with distinction through July 31, 2020.

Visionary Leadership and Legacy

During his nearly 15 years at the helm as CEO, Art revitalized The John Birch Society, expanding its reach and influence while remaining faithful to its founding principles. He championed grassroots engagement and education, emphasizing the importance of face-to-face engagement in recruiting members and building relationships. "We're building character," Art stressed, underscoring the Society's commitment to integrity



and trust. During a phone interview this past summer, he elaborated:

> We want people of character. I can't tell that over a Zoom meeting. I can't tell that over the phone. I might to a certain degree but I don't know for sure. And so, you put these people to work then you recruit them into The John Birch Society. It's tedious but it works. It builds a solid foundation that doesn't exist if you don't do it that way. And you become friends; you know each other and you can trust each other.

Art's leadership philosophy combined patience, persistence, and visibility. Whether spearheading campaigns such as the Movement to Restore Decency or *Get US Out!* of the United Nations, he demonstrated the value of steady, principled action.

Beyond his executive duties, Art was a prolific author and speaker. He hosted various JBS video series, including the weekly *Analysis Behind the News*, *Myths vs. Facts*, a brief *Bill of Rights* series, and, more recently, *Activate America*. His many books — including *International Merger by Foreign Entanglements*; *The United Nations: Unity Through Tyranny*; *China: The Deep State's Trojan Horse in America*; *In the Shadows of the Deep State*; *Property Rights: As Sacred as the Laws of God*; and his latest, *Preserving Our Freedom by Stopping the Migration Invasion* — continue to educate and inspire. His magnum opus, *To the Victor Go the Myths & Monuments: The History of the First 100 Years of the War Against God and the Constitution, 1776-1876, and Its Modern Impact*, published in 2016, is the result of more than 40 years of meticulous research into the subversive and conspiratorial battles shaping the United States' first 100 years. Additionally, his forewords for the monthly *JBS Bulletin* were a treasure, chock full of insight and information unknown to most Americans.

Remembering a Humble Patriot

Art's humility, sense of humor, and confidence in others left an indelible mark on those who knew him. Colleagues remember his booming laughter echoing through the office and his ability to connect with everyone on a personal level. "He put a lot of trust in me," said his longtime secretary, Julie Smith. "He helped me grow in ways I never envisioned."

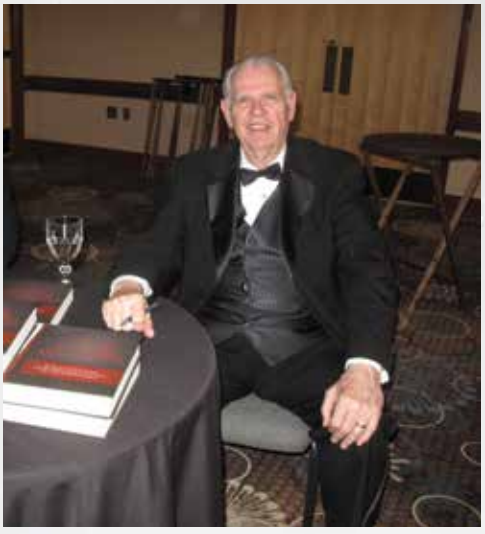
Art didn't care if he or someone else got the credit, so long as the work got done with the desired results. Though he didn't seek the praise of men, anyone who knew or worked closely with him would say that he was more than deserving of accolades. He demonstrated steadfast leadership and an unwavering dedication to the JBS mission, yet was always able to take time from his busy schedule to talk with people one-on-one, share his insights, and ask what they thought about a given topic.

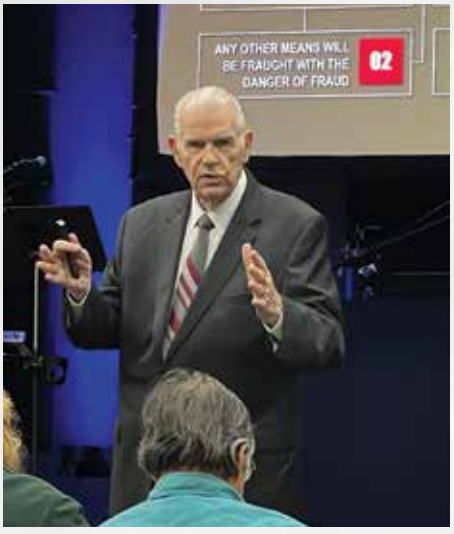
The author of this article, along with many others on the JBS staff, has fond memories of Art. To many, this author included, Art was more than a leader — he was a mentor, a friend, and a father figure. His enduring legacy lies not only in his achievements, but also in the countless lives he touched and inspired. "When I think of a true patriot, I think of Art," said JBS Media Director Cathy Spoehr. "He was like a second father to me," she said, adding, "There's no way that anyone who truly knew the man couldn't love him."

Art is survived by his second wife, Joanne E. (née Ciske) Thompson, whom he married in 2009, and his two daughters from his previous marriage to Darlene Doris (née Dahl) Thompson, who passed away in 2007. We will treasure his memory and dedication to a free and independent America. He will be greatly missed.

As *The New American* and The John Birch Society mourn Art's passing, we celebrate his unwavering dedication to individual freedom and national independence. Art's memory will continue to guide and inspire all who share his vision of a free and sovereign America.

Rest in peace, Art Thompson, a true patriot and champion of liberty. ■





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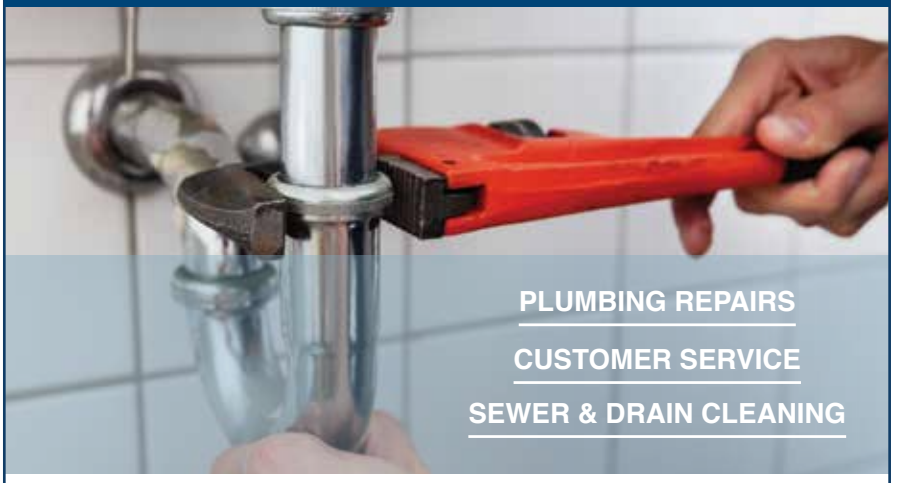

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All Treats, No Tricks

A touching Halloween moment unfolded in Woodhaven, Michigan, when local kids chose to turn their trick-or-treat outing into an act of kindness. Amy Schmitt and her adult son, Jacob — who is disabled and wheelchair-bound — were regular Halloween participants, known for dressing up and sharing treats with neighborhood kids. This year, however, a medical emergency kept Jacob in the hospital, and Amy left a note on their door explaining why they couldn't hand out candy.

Amy's doorbell camera soon captured a surprising sight: kids, who had just collected candy around the neighborhood, stopping by her house to drop off their treats. Many poured out generous portions from their candy bags, transforming her porch into a pile of Halloween cheer.

Among the kids was six-year-old Mia, who had already finished her first round of trick-or-treating but asked her dad to go out with her a second time. This time, she gathered candy just to give it to Jacob. Her dad, James Sayen, was deeply impressed by his daughter's compassion, noting it was a choice she made entirely on her own.

Amy was moved by the children's thoughtfulness, reflecting on how they went out of their way to bring joy to her family during a tough time. She also praised the kids' parents for raising such considerate youngsters, recognizing how this gesture was a reflection of the community's values.

For Amy and Jacob, who were so grateful for the thoughtful gesture, this Halloween became a symbol of the kindness and support that close-knit communities can bring to those in need.

Dream Come True

Twelve-year-old Devarjaye "DJ" Daniel, who has been battling terminal brain and spine cancer since age six, was recently honored by Alabama's law-enforcement community in a heartwarming ceremony in which he was sworn in as an honorary deputy chief. This latest title brings DJ's impressive total to more than 900 honorary positions with law-enforcement agencies across the country. His journey began in 2019, when he was sworn in by the Brookshire Police Department in Texas, and his dedication has since earned him recognition in hundreds of agencies nationwide.

On October 25, DJ joined the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA) and the Birmingham Police Department, where ALEA Secretary Hal Taylor and Department of Public Safety Director Colonel Jonathan Archer welcomed him into their family, recognizing his unwavering dream to be a police officer. DJ's father, Theodis Daniel, expressed deep gratitude to the officers, telling them, "You just made his day, but you've been saving his life for the last five years." Through his ongoing battle, DJ has undergone 13 surgeries, yet his positivity and resilience remain strong.

Known for his inspiring spirit, DJ encourages others to "believe in God, stay safe, stay positive, be kind to others, pray for kids with cancer, and don't be mean to people." His father hopes DJ's journey inspires others to cherish life and appreciate their blessings. DJ's honorary title with Alabama's law-enforcement community adds to his legacy as a young hero and an inspiration.

Wedding Generosity

When their wedding plans were disrupted by Hurricane Helene, a couple from Greensboro, North Carolina, decided to give back to the community instead of dwelling on disappointment.

Jessica Beebe and Will Landacre had spent two years planning their wedding, set at a scenic venue in Independence, Virginia. However, severe flooding from the hurricane forced them to call off their plans. Will joined local efforts to clear fallen trees and assist in recovery, while Jessica helped with cleanup, holding onto hope that their wedding might still happen. Yet, as conditions worsened, they ultimately canceled their rehearsal dinner and, later, their wedding day.

With food already prepared for their guests, the couple decided to distribute it to community members in need. They set up in a local grocery-store parking lot, where neighbors came to receive meals.

Reflecting on the experience, Will expressed gratitude: "We're very grateful that we're safe and still going to get married. We hope others continue helping with the cleanup."

Trump Delivers

In the wake of Hurricane Milton, then-presidential candidate Donald Trump offered complimentary accommodations to 275 Florida Power and Light Company (FPL) linemen at his Trump National Doral resort in Miami as they prepared to assist in hurricane recovery efforts.

Trump's son Eric shared a video of the arriving linemen, stating, "Honored to have 275 incredible linemen from FPL at @TrumpDoral as they get ready to respond to the aftermath of Hurricane #Milton!… The Trump Family, and entire state of Florida, appreciates you! Enjoy the rooms — they are the best in Florida! Be safe!"

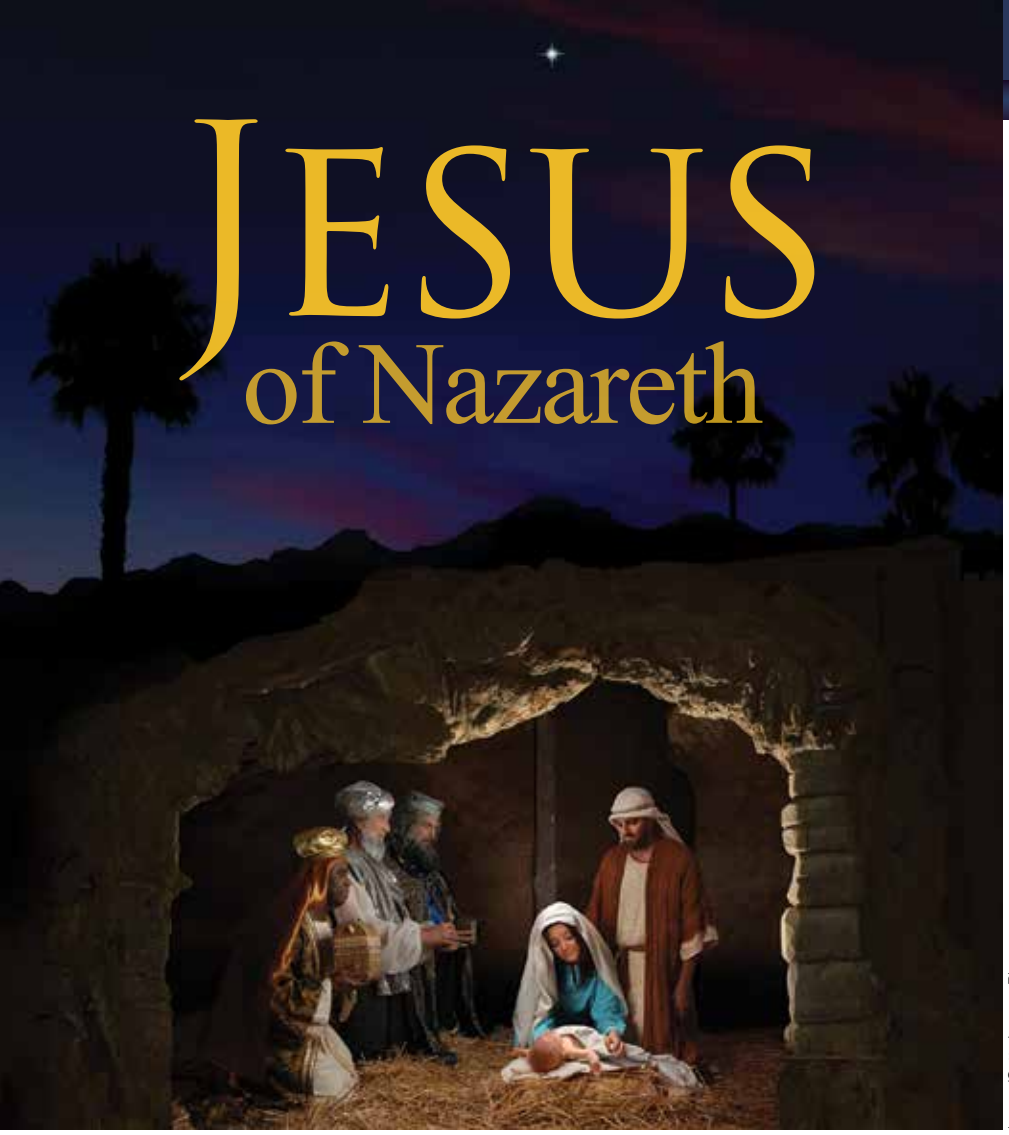
The gesture received widespread praise on social media. "The Trump Family loves America! And America loves the Trumps!" one user commented. Another called the action "amazing," acknowledging the family's commitment to helping during difficult times.

Meanwhile, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis announced that the state had mobilized a substantial workforce of linemen in preparation for the hurricane's impact, with 37,000 workers stationed around Florida to help restore power. He highlighted the importance of the linemen's efforts, noting that the number could increase to 40,000 to ensure rapid restoration after the storm. "Some of them have traveled a long way to be here," DeSantis said, underscoring the dedication of those prepared to aid in recovery.

Hurricane Milton, which made landfall as a Category 3 storm, was downgraded to Category 2 shortly after hitting Florida. The combined support of the linemen, state officials, and local communities was essential to getting residents back on their feet quickly. ■

— Raven Clabough

JESUS of Nazareth



jgroup/Getty Images Plus

He was born in a stable, never acquired wealth, never ruled an earthly kingdom, and never commanded an army. Yet he changed the world for all time.

by James J. Drummey

His birthday is celebrated throughout the world this month. Though he lived on earth only 33 years, today's date is measured from when he was born. Though he lived in an obscure corner of the Roman Empire nearly 2,000 years ago, more than one billion people today call themselves his followers. Though he never wrote a book, tens of thousands of books have been written about his life and his teachings. His name is Jesus, and he has had a more salutary influence on human history than any person who ever lived.

This article originally appeared in the December 23, 1981 issue of The Review of the News, *a predecessor of* The New American.

It was an unknown author who offered this striking summary of Jesus' impact on the history of the past 20 centuries: "I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched , and all the navies that ever sailed, all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, put together have not affected the life of man upon this earth as powerfully as this one solitary life."

According to the four Gospels, which scholars have shown to be reliable historical works, Jesus Christ was born in a stable in Bethlehem, a town in Roman occupied Palestine, around 4 BC. His birth was attended by shepherds and heralded by angels singing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men of good will." After a flight into Egypt to escape the murderous wrath of King Herod, the infant Jesus returned to Palestine with his parents, Mary and Joseph, and grew up in the village of Nazareth, where he worked in Joseph's carpenter shop.

At the age of 30 Jesus left Nazareth, gathered around him 12 men who became known as his apostles, and traveled throughout Palestine preaching love of God and love of neighbor and attracting followers by the thousands because he spoke with authority. He was a marvelous storyteller, illustrating his teachings with examples about persons, places, and things that were familiar to his listeners. Jesus spoke of fishermen casting their nets, farmers harvesting their fields, laborers working in the vineyards, shepherds chasing after their lost sheep, and a pompous religious leader lording it over a humble and repentant sinner.

The parables of Christ are often cited even by non-Christians as literary and moral masterpieces for the simple yet profound messages they convey. To answer the question, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus told the story of the Good Samaritan, a bitter enemy of the Jews who nevertheless assisted a Jewish man left for dead by robbers after two of the victim's countrymen had ignored his plight.

To illustrate the forgiveness of God, Jesus related the tale of the Prodigal Son, the younger of two boys who took his share of the family's wealth, spent it all on loose living, and returned home shamefaced and repentant. His father, representing God, not only forgave his son but threw a party for him because the young man "was lost, and is found."

The core of Jesus' moral code was love, not only of God and neighbor but even of enemies. He adhered to this difficult standard himself on the cross by asking forgiveness for those who had crucified him. "This is my commandment: Love one another as I have loved you," Jesus told the apostles at the Last Supper. "There is no greater love than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends." He exemplified this love himself by dying on the cross for the sins of the world.

Jesus urged his followers personally to help those in need — the hungry, the thirsty, the sick, the imprisoned, saying that whatever they did "for one of my least brothers, you did it for me." He asked them to forgive

Wikipedia/Public Domain

the faults of others and laid down the Golden Rule: "Treat others the way you would have them treat you." He forbade murder and adultery, anger and hatred, and encouraged prayer, fasting, and sacrifice, saying that "if a man wishes to come after me, he must deny his very self, take up his cross, and follow in my steps."

Thousands of people were drawn to Jesus by his tenderness and compassion for the sick and the suffering ("Come to me, all you who are weary and find life burdensome, and I will refresh you"); by his mercy and forgiveness toward sinners (when the Pharisees criticized him for associating with sinners, Jesus said, "People who are healthy do not need a doctor; sick people do"); and by his courage and fearlessness (He chased the moneychangers out of the temple and condemned the hypocrisy of the Scribes and Pharisees, comparing them to "whitewashed tombs — beautiful to look at on the outside but inside full of filth and dead men's bones").

Angry at Jesus' criticism of them and jealous of the crowds that followed him, the Pharisees sent clever men out to question Jesus while he was speaking in the hope of tripping him up. But he confounded them time and again, as when they asked him if it were lawful to pay taxes to the hated Romans, and he replied: "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, but give to God what is God's." Or when they asked if a woman caught in adultery should be stoned to death, and Christ said: "Let the man among you who has no sin be the first to cast a stone at her."

But Christians throughout the world believe that Jesus was more than just a good and holy man; they believe that he was the Son of God, the Messiah promised in the Old Testament. As evidence of their belief, Christians cite the fulfillment in Jesus of Old Testament prophecies regarding the place and circumstances of the Messiah's birth, the betrayal and suffering he would endure, and the manner in which he would die.

But the most convincing evidence of Jesus' claim to be God, they say, was the spectacular miracles he performed before hundreds and even thousands of eyewitnesses ("These very works which I perform testify on my behalf that the Father has sent me"). The Gospels report that he changed water into wine; cured the blind, deaf, and lame; exorcised demons from people; fed thousands with only a few loaves of bread and fishes; and raised three people from the dead.

Christians throughout the world believe that Jesus was more than just a good and holy man; they believe that he was the Son of God, the Messiah promised in the Old Testament.

The raising of Lazarus four days after he had died was the last straw as far as the chief priests and Pharisees were concerned, and they plotted to kill Jesus, getting unexpected help from one of Christ's own apostles, Judas, who was willing to betray his master for 30 pieces of silver. Jesus was arrested late at night, put through the mockery of a trial, beaten and tortured, and finally put to death on the orders of Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor.

The followers of Jesus thought that they had seen the last of him when his body was taken down from the cross and placed in a borrowed grave outside Jerusalem nearly 2,000 years ago. But three days later, according to the Gospels, the tomb was found to be empty, and more than a dozen people reported having seen Jesus alive that Sunday. Over the next 40 days, Jesus was reportedly seen in different places at different times by individuals, by small groups of people, and by large groups, including a crowd of 500.

On the 40th day, according to reliable eyewitness accounts, Jesus gave his apostles their final instructions — to carry his teachings "to the ends of the earth." He promised to remain with his church "until the end of the world" and then rose up into the heavens.

Whatever attitude people hold toward Jesus Christ, whether they believe him to be God or not, there is no question that if his teachings were faithfully followed by everyone, the world would be a better and more peaceful place in which to live. Merry Christmas! ■

A Flat Tire, a Machete — and a Gun?

While many cases of armed self-defense involve a career criminal engaging in a premeditated crime, there are also "heat of the moment" situations in which people get so angry they engage in violent behavior that ends in a lethal shooting. One such incident occurred on November 2 in Hialeah, Florida.

NBC Miami reported that 36-year-old Michel Lope Montes de Oca had a flat tire and called a mobile tire-repair service. The mechanic for the company showed up and replaced the tire, but at some point, Montes de Oca learned that the replacement was not a brand-new tire and became enraged. Police investigators say Montes de Oca grabbed a machete and threatened the mechanic with bodily harm. The mechanic, in fear for his life, retrieved a loaded firearm and shot Montes de Oca, fatally wounding him. The mechanic called 911, and Hialeah police arrived to discover the deceased suspect's body at the scene.

After authorities concluded their investigation, the Hialeah police said, "Based on the information obtained by Detectives, it was determined that this was a justified shooting in self-defense."

Another Heated Moment

In another heat-of-the-moment type of story, the *Tampa Bay Times* reported on November 1 about a deadly shooting that occurred in St. Petersburg, Florida, during an altercation between contractors. Investigators state that the incident took place at the site of a vacant home that was being renovated, where a general contractor was having a dispute with one of his subcontractors over some tile work that was done at the home.

It appears that the general contractor was either not pleased with the quality of the work that was done by the tile worker and was withholding payment, or the two were arguing over the amount of the payment. As the argument escalated, the tile worker became enraged and started damaging the tiles that he had already installed. The general contractor ran to his vehicle, retrieved a loaded gun, and returned to the site, where he threatened to shoot the tile worker if he didn't stop the destruction. The tile worker's father, who works on installing tile with his son and was also there, pulled out his own gun and shot the general contractor in defense of his son. The workers then called 911, and the St. Petersburg police soon arrived.

The general contractor was taken to a nearby medical facility for treatment, but succumbed to his wounds. The St. Petersburg police later issued a press release in which they explained that police investigators had determined that the father's shooting of the general contractor was "justifiable self-defense of another."

"He Did What He Had to Do"

WFAA.com reported on October 30 out of Fort Worth, Texas, about a terrifying nighttime break-in involving a young family. The Fort Worth Police Department was called to a home shortly after midnight for reports of a possible break-in, and discovered the wounded suspect, who had apparently been shot twice.

Investigators spoke with the family of five and learned that their dog's barking alerted them to an intruder on their property. They looked out a window and saw a man vandalizing their fence. The wife called 911 while the husband armed himself. At this point the intruder became more aggressive and smashed one of the daughter's bedroom windows with part of the fence. The husband yelled for him to stop, but the man tried entering the house through the kitchen door. The husband shot the suspect. The wife, who identified herself only as Christina, praised her husband for his brave actions. "He just protected our family. Yeah, he did what he had to do…. It was self-defense, what I'm afraid of is for the guy getting out maybe through bond or something and coming back."

Christina added that they are used to some wild behavior in the area, but this was definitely not something they ever expected to happen. "In this neighborhood, we see a lot of stuff going on but we never thought we were [going to] go through something like this…. Something so scary." she told WFAA.

Fort Worth Police public information officer Tracy Carter told WFAA that the suspect "is lucky to be alive. The homeowner did what any of us would have done, we'd [want to] protect our family." The suspect was booked "on suspicion of burglary of a habitation in connection to the incident," and the husband is not expected to face any charges for his actions.

Concealed-carry Moms

Business Insider published an article on October 27 titled "Moms who carry concealed weapons around their kids share why they do it — and the risks involved." The article opened with how mothers who carry are using the hashtags #concealcarry and #concealcarrymom when they post videos on social media of them carrying concealed while engaging in typical motherly behavior.

The website profiled three mothers, and explained the specifics of how they carry concealed. Twenty-eight-year-old Elizabeth Brownell, from Virginia, has a six-month-old daughter and conceals her Glock 43X in a cross-body bag slung across her chest. She says that she started carrying once she became a mother.

Another mother, who sometimes carries her gun in a fanny pack, added, "It's nice to know that if something were to happen, then I can at least protect me and my children."

The mothers profiled utilize multiple safety precautions, such as storing the guns safely away from the children when not carrying them and keeping them in holsters while carrying them.

Business Insider reported that the "National Shooting Sports Foundation … reported a 77% rise in female gun ownership in the US from 2005 to 2020. Between 2019 and 2021, half of all firearm purchases were made by women; one in four women now report owning a firearm." Based on those statistics, it seems that the trend of women carrying concealed will only increase in the years to come. ■

— Patrick Krey

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THE REVIEW

John Birch: American Patriot

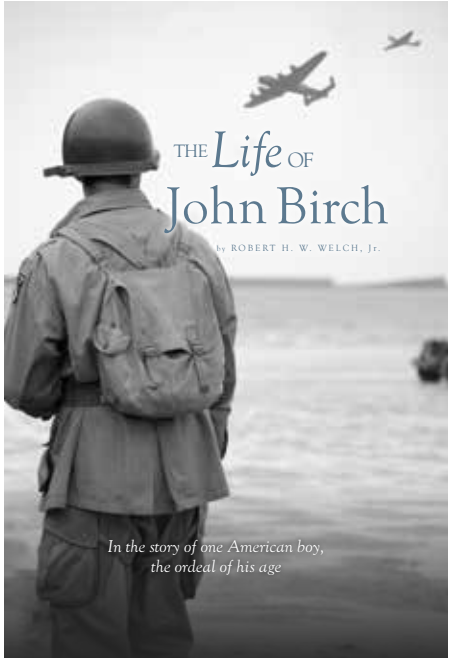
by Steve Byas

***The Life of John Birch*,** by Robert H.W. Welch, Jr., Appleton, Wisconsin: The John Birch Society, 2024 edition (first edition: 1954), 182 pages, paperback and hardcover (see inside back cover).

"Often in these days, I feel that those barren years are my apprenticeship, God-given, and that a message is being formed, by Him, within me, that will one day burn its way out and across man's barriers, into the souls of many men."

This quotation, from a letter to his sister from China in 1944, is a concise summary of the life of Captain John Birch, a Baptist missionary to China who became an American intelligence officer during WWII. Birch was murdered by Chinese communists a few days after the Japanese had surrendered in 1945, and is believed to be the first American soldier killed by communists in the Cold War. This murder was covered up by the U.S. government for years.

Upon hearing Birch's story, an American candy manufacturer and patriotic anti-communist, Robert Welch, believed



the tragedy of Birch's killing needed to be told. Thus, in 1954, his book *The Life of John Birch* was published by Regnery, and later by Western Islands. Welch went on to found the constitutionalist and anti-communist John Birch Society in 1958, named after Captain Birch.

John Birch's parents were American missionaries to India. Upon their return to America, they settled in Georgia. Birch came of age during the Great Depression, and his family was, like so many of the day, quite poor. But Birch had a desire to go to the mission field, and entered Mercer University — a Baptist institution in Georgia — from which he graduated in 1939 *magna cum laude*. After graduation, he went to Fort Worth to attend Bible Baptist Seminary, completing his two-year study track in one year and graduating at the head of his class.

At the time of Birch's graduation in 1940, China was led by Chiang Kai-shek, a Methodist Christian who was open to the Gospel. Birch was sent by the Baptists to China, where he settled into the austere life of a Christian missionary — living on two dollars a month.

Birch's life changed dramatically in 1942. After the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the American public was demanding that the United States enter the war against Japan.

Thus was conceived a bombing raid over Tokyo, which was led by Colonel Jimmy Doolittle. But, as Welch wrote, "the planes [had] no place to land within their fuel range." The coastal provinces of China were "full of [Japanese] occupation troops," and many pilots either crashed or were shot down over Japan or China. Fortunately for Doolittle and the men who were with him in his airplane, they made it to China. Still, they were not far from the Japanese forces, and in grave danger.

Sympathetic Chinese alerted the young Baptist missionary John Birch, who was

Welch's biography of Birch is exceptionally well-written and easy to read. The book was obviously heavily researched, and details Birch's time serving the Lord he loved.

John Birch (second from left) with Chinese and American comrades-in-arms

eating a cheap meal in a Chinese restaurant near the western boundary of Chekiang Province.

Welch provides a brief but exciting description of Birch's rescue of Doolittle. Reading the account, it is easy to imagine what a great story this would make for the silver screen. As Welch explained, one Chinese patron whispered to Birch, "If you are an American, please follow me." Outside, Birch was taken to a small, covered riverboat, lying alongside a river bank. "In that boat," Welch wrote, "he finds Colonel James H. Doolittle, who has been hidden and brought this far by Chinese patriots."

Not only did Birch save Doolittle and the men with him, he was "instrumental" in rounding up and saving a number of the men from several of the other planes as well. "Without him," Welch explained, "it is doubtful that any of these flyers, or their commander himself, would have escaped capture and torture by the Japanese."

Birch was soon recruited to serve as an intelligence officer in the U.S. Army, and was commissioned a captain. In this position, he provided valuable information to American forces, and is credited with greatly helping the American war effort against the Japanese in China. He was later awarded the Legion of Merit by

General Claire Chennault pins Legion of Merit on Captain Birch.

John, two years old, at Landaur, India, on his father's shoulders

General Claire Chennault, at the recommendation of Doolittle and others.

Welch documents in the book the intelligence exploits of Captain Birch, followed by the story of his tragic murder by a patrol of Chinese communist troops in August 1945. (While the government of China, under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek, was fighting a desperate battle against the invaders from Japan, it also had to contend with a rival force of Chinese communists under Mao Zedong.)

Welch wrote that he was "puzzled" as to why "so heroic, brilliant, and consecrated a patriot [was] so completely unknown in America."

As he dug deeper, he came to realize that the story of John Birch was deliberately kept from the American people by some powerful individuals within our own government. He cited Senator William Knowland — a leading constitutionalist member of the Senate in the 1950s — who said that if the story of Birch had been known and understood, it could have made a huge difference in our attitude and the circumstances that led to our involvement in the war in Korea.

Welch details the cover-up of Birch's killing, at the direction of high-ranking persons in the American government, and the reasons for it.

In this new, 2024 edition, John Birch's nephew (also named John M. Birch) issues an "invitation" to readers: "Robert Welch's inspiring book about my late uncle is needed even more today than when he first published it in 1954 — nine years after Captain Birch's brutal murder by Chinese Communist soldiers, five years after my birth, and four years before the founding of The John Birch Society."

The younger John Birch continued, "This fine organization's dedication to truth and liberty has drawn many thousands to it, including myself. You see, the foundational principles of our great nation have been under attack, largely by the same organized forces that took the life of Uncle John."

He added that his uncle's "ingenious strategies and bravery saved countless American and Allied lives, often in amazing ways." "It's no wonder that Mr. Welch asked my grandparents about naming his upcoming organization after Uncle John," he said, noting that they became life members and chapter leaders of The John Birch Society.

Finally, Birch's nephew encouraged the reading of the book, the sharing of it with others, and the joining in "our epic undertaking" to save the nation — and the world — from the evil forces that wish to impose upon us totalitarianism.

The new edition has colorized the multiple photographs that were included in the original, including one of young Birch hoisted on his father's shoulders when his parents were missionaries to India. Another photo documents the awarding of the Legion of Merit by General Chennault. And along with the other pictures, there is one of the burial services of Captain Birch, who was beloved by the Chinese people who knew him.

As the war neared its end, Birch penned a short essay in April of 1945 titled "The War Weary Farmer," which is reprinted in the book. In it, he expounded on his political philosophy, writing, "I want of Government only protection against the violence and injustices of evil or selfish men." This essay closely approximates the slogan of The John Birch Society: "Less government, more responsibility, and — with God's help — a better world."

Welch's biography of Birch is exceptionally well-written and easy to read. The book was obviously heavily researched, and details Birch's time serving the Lord he loved.

This is a book that I can highly recommend. Readers will be inspired by the story of one of our nation's greatest patriots — Baptist missionary and Army Captain John M. Birch. ■

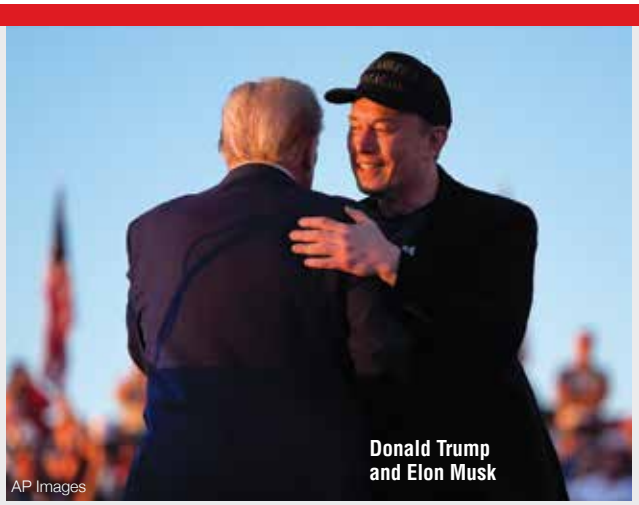
Captain John Birch at Changsha, 1944

Burial of Captain John Birch with full military honors

THE LAST WORD

It's Time to Press Our Advantage

by Steve Bonta


AP Images

Donald Trump and Elon Musk

The Great Election of 2024 is in the history books and, after a heroic campaign supported by billionaire entrepreneurs and grassroots activists alike, Donald Trump and his MAGA movement have completed the greatest political comeback in American history. Having endured years of persecution and leftist media-fueled obloquy, Trump and a GOP majority in both houses of Congress are poised to end the lawfare, the censorship, the out-of-control spending, and, in general, the tyrannical overreach of Big Government and its Deep State boosters. The good guys have finally won, and the rest of us, having discharged our civic duty at the polls, can go back to our barbecues, our sports events, and our gaming. Right?

Well, not quite.

Although there is ample ground for optimism, it is already becoming clear that the next administration will be divergent from constitutional and Americanist standards on a number of counts. It is already apparent, for example, that, far from ending unconstitutional Cabinet posts and agencies, Trump intends to MAGA-fy many of them, appointing allies and even sycophants to purge objectionable woke elements while keeping the illegitimate bodies themselves intact.

This is manifestly true of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), for example. Trump has already named former New York Congressman Lee Zeldin as EPA chief, noting in a statement to the press that "[Zeldin] will ensure fair and swift deregulatory decisions that will be enacted in a way to unleash the power of American businesses, while at the same time maintaining the highest environmental standards, including the cleanest air and water on the planet. He will set new standards on environmental review and maintenance." Zeldin will not, be it noted, seek to wind down the EPA. His Trump-era mandate is to improve its performance. It's pretty clear that Trump has no problem with an unconstitutional federal agency imposing environmental regulations on the private sector from sea to shining sea; it merely needs to be more efficient and more aligned with MAGA priorities.

Then there's Kristi Noem, South Dakota's MAGA warrior-woman, who will replace the feculent Alejandro Mayorkas as head of DHS. Time was when rational minds wanted the Orwellian Department of Homeland Security terminated before it could morph into the dystopian apparatus of surveillance and oppression it has predictably become. But Noem's mandate, far from closing down the Bush-era bureaucratic panopticon, will be to re-focus its dark energy on border security — leaving in place the oppressive homeland security machinery for future American presidents to abuse.

The novel and oxymoronically named Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), to be headed by Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy, is a fitting if unintended metaphor for Trump's prioritizing of performance over legitimacy. What is sorely needed is not more efficient, cost-effective Big Government, but strict conformity to constitutional limits on government size and power.

Of course, there are grounds for believing that the upcoming second Trump administration will be less captive to the liberal globalist Establishment than any other in living memory. Noteworthy among top Cabinet picks and other key positions so far has been the comparative absence of Deep State-vetted and approved candidates pulled from the ranks of the Council on Foreign Relations and other establishmentarian talent pools. Particularly upsetting to official Washington and its media echo chambers was the unexpected choice of Pete Hegseth for secretary of defense, a key position long held captive by the Deep State. Another somewhat encouraging choice is former Texas Congressman John Ratcliffe as CIA head. Ratcliffe's voting record is less than exemplary, but, as with Hegseth, he appears to lack the usual Establishment credentials reserved for nominees to this post.

This is not to say that the Deep State will not find ways to exert control over the MAGA agenda. But Trump does appear to have learned from his first go-round in the Swamp.

Our task at The John Birch Society and *The New American* remains unchanged: holding our elected leaders to the timeless standard of the Constitution, and exposing and opposing the machinations of the radical Left and Deep State insiders.

The enemies of freedom never falter in their designs, and neither should we grow complacent. The time has come to press our advantage. ■

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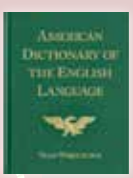
Webster's 1828 American Dictionary of the English Language



Noah Webster's dictionary defines words as they were understood during the Founding Era (making it a prerequisite to understanding America's founding documents) and within a biblical context. Facsimile of the original. (2,000pp, hb, 1-4/$74.95ea; 5+/$70.95ea) **BKD1828**

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